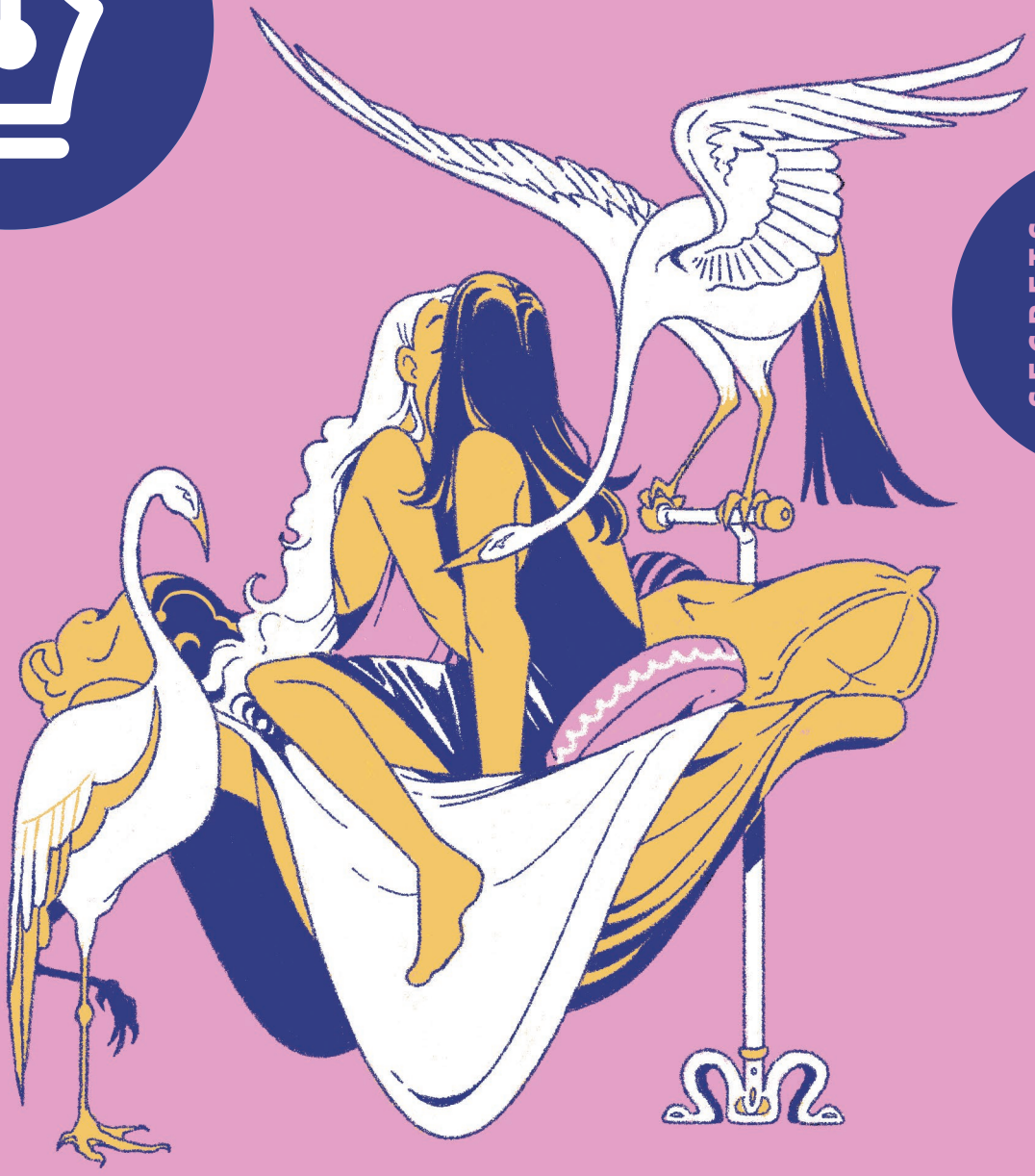

SECRETS

THE NIB

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D T C S V K F I O X Y O C A B C O V E R T V M P R I V A T E Z M E J D T J S N T

THE GAME IS AFOOT! CAN YOU FIND THESE FIFTY *SECRET* WORDS?

BUSYBODY
CIPHER
CLANDESTINE
CLASSIFIED
CODE
CODEBREAKING
CONCEAL
CONFIDENTIAL
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE
COVERT
CRYPTOGRAM
DECEPTION
DETECTIVE
DISGUISE
ENCRYPTION
ENIGMA
ESPIONAGE
HACKER
HIDDEN
HONEYPOT
HUSH
INTELLIGENCE
INTERROGATION
INVESTIGATE
LEAK
MOLE
MYSTERY
OPERATIVE
PEEPER
PRIVATE
PUZZLE
RECONNAISSANCE
REDACTED
RIDDLE
SECRETS
SLEUTH
SLY
SNEAKY
SNOOP
SPY
STEALTH
SUBTERFUGE
SURREPTITIOUS
SURVEILLANCE
TRANSPARENCY
UNDERCOVER
UNDERGROUND
VEILED
WHODUNIT
WIRETAP

THE NIB

Design by Mark Kaufman

THE FREE MASONS
G
ORIGINATING AS A WAY FOR MASTER BUILDERS TO RECOGNIZE ONE ANOTHER IN THE MIDDLE AGES, THE FREEMASONS ARE ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS SECRET SOCIETIES TODAY. WHILE UNSUBSTANTIATED, RUMORS EXIST THAT THE MASONS WERE BEHIND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, HID TEMPLAR TREASURE, AND PRINT THEIR SYMBOLOGY ON OUR MONEY.

THE ONLY PERSON YOU CAN TRUST IS YOURSELF.

That's what we're told, right? You can never really know what's going on in someone else's head, or in a room you're not in. That's what makes a secret so compelling. The contents of a secret exist in a quantum state, coalescing into a single thing only once it's identified. But in that thrilling and terrifying space before it's known to you, it could be anything.

Having a secret can be a great feeling–who doesn't want to be the keeper of a forbidden piece of knowledge? But it can eat away at you so easily when it's keeping you from living the life you'd like to lead, or worse. Still, we're always saying the truth wants to be free. Should it be? Are some things better kept unknown? When we talk about secrets we talk about the fundamental nature of one's reality–something kept from us can either build our personal universes or completely destroy them.

When we were first planning out subjects for issues, "secrets" was always at the top of the list. Who doesn't love a juicy bit of gossip? But a secret can be so much more than that. We keep them for all sorts of reasons–personal safety, fear of confrontation, what we think is best for another person, and on and on. Maybe you work in international espionage, like the story from Triple Dream Comics about the CIA's method of throwing a KGB tail by inflating a sex doll in their car's passenger seat. Or maybe you don't want to come out to your family yet, like Apollo Baltazar during the pandemic. Of course, placing someone in a situation where they're separated from the truth is only going to set them seeking. Like Meg O'Shea's long, fruitless search for her birth parents–and the community she found along the way on the same quest. Or maybe developers and the government begin demolishing a nature reserve without telling anyone, like in Max Loh's dispatch.

Or maybe you'd just like to learn how to keep a secret with the help of infosec expert Micah Lee, so all your mysteries can stay in that state of uncertainty for good.

The foundation of human existence is attraction to, or repulsion from, the unknown. The release of tension when a secret is broken into your confidence is maybe the most satisfying feeling in the universe. Ever your humble servants, in this issue, we wanted to pass that feeling along to you: our beloved reader.

Just don't tell anyone, okay?

MATTIE LUBCHANSKY

Mattie Lubchansky
Associate Editor

MENSAM DE CONTENTA SECRETA

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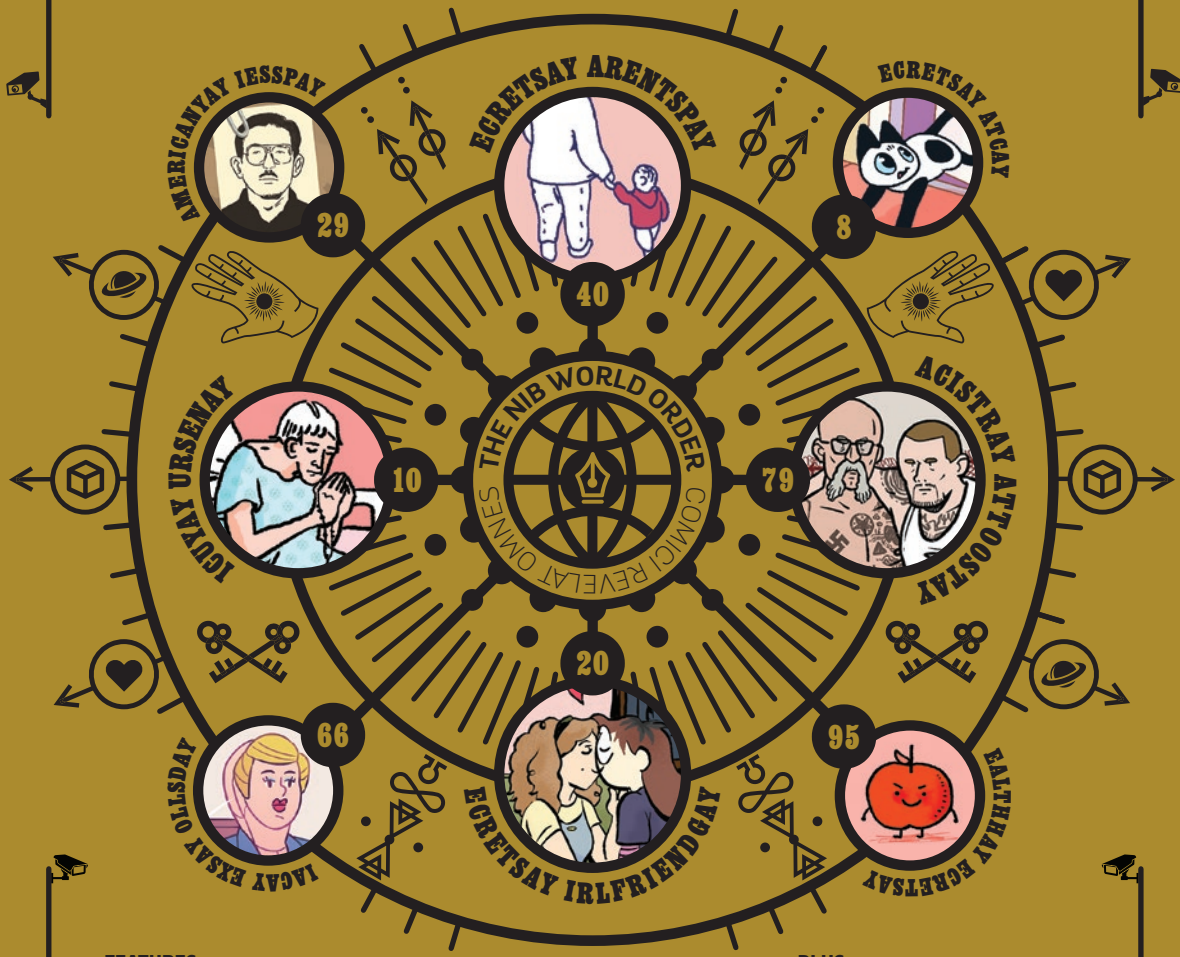

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PLUS

Covers, masthead, contributors page, and section illustrations by Rosemary Valero-O'Connell

Interstitial illustrations by Andrew Greenstone

Table of contents and inside cover design by Mark Kaufman

The Inkwell

the Phantom of the Inkwell

Illustration by Mark Kaufman

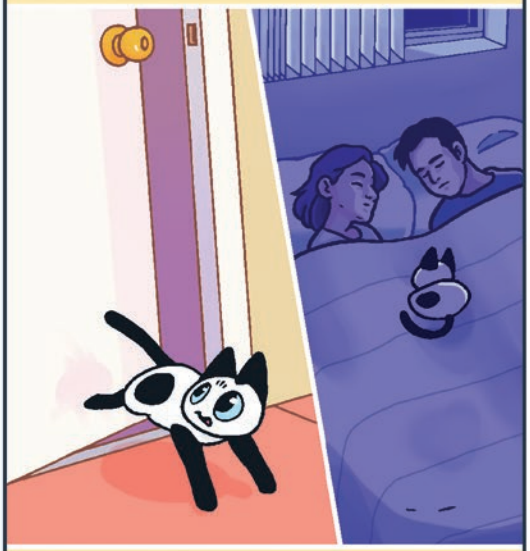
Just as they uncovered the final clues to the mystery of how an independent publisher of nonfiction and political comics was possible, a deep, raspy voice from the shadows intoned "*You are the secret!*" For when you join The Inkwell, our not-so-secret membership program, you help support us online and in print. Join today at **thenib.com/inkwell**.

THE NIB

HIDDEN KITTEN by Rachel Dukes

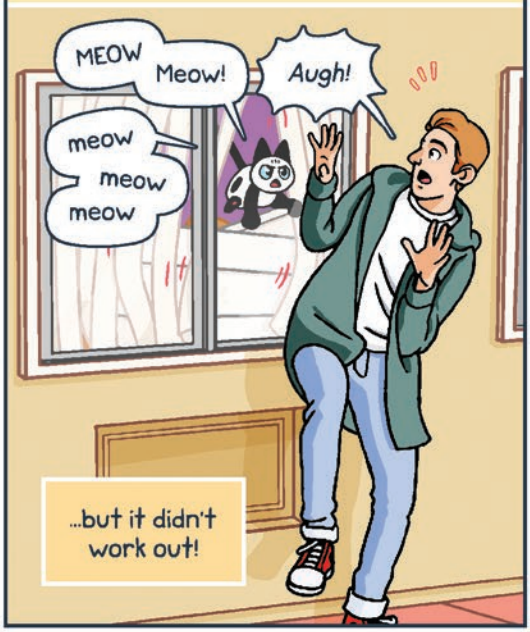
In 2009, a stray kitten stole our hearts. We kept her and named her Frankie, but our rental agreement didn't allow pets, so we had to keep her a secret.

At first, she went outside when we left the apartment.



Later, we wanted her to be safe and stay inside full time.

We blocked our walkway-facing windows with boxes of comics to try and deter Frankie from staring at the neighbors...



The apartment manager's husband began harassing us, saying the owner would start doing random inspections, and left an angry note on our door.

We had lived in the building for five years – longer than any other occupants, including the building manager. We tried to negotiate with the owner directly...
We'll sign a new lease for a year if you let us keep her.
...but it didn't work out.
We found an apartment just a few blocks away with better upkeep and a balcony where Frankie could enjoy the outside safely.
As we left the old apartment for the final time, the building manager's husband approached us and apologized.
It's just that we also secretly adopted a stray and didn't want to be found out!
He said that losing us – his longest tenants – over a cat had changed the owner's mind, and now the building accepted pets!

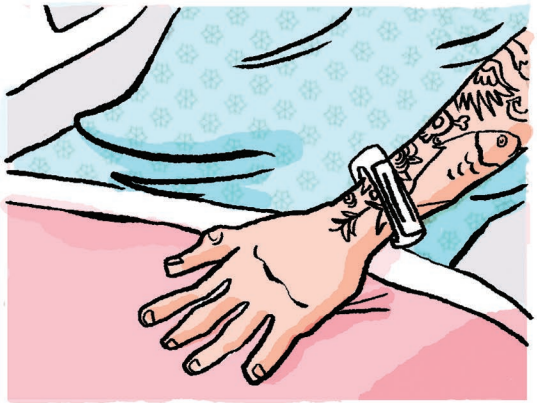
LAST GASP

by ERNESTO BARBIERI, RN & JESS RULIFFSON

AT THE END OF LIFE, THINGS CRAWL INWARD. FINGERS CURL. FACES STIFFEN. BLOOD RETREATS TO THE VITAL ORGANS, DRAINING THE SKIN OF ITS COLOR...

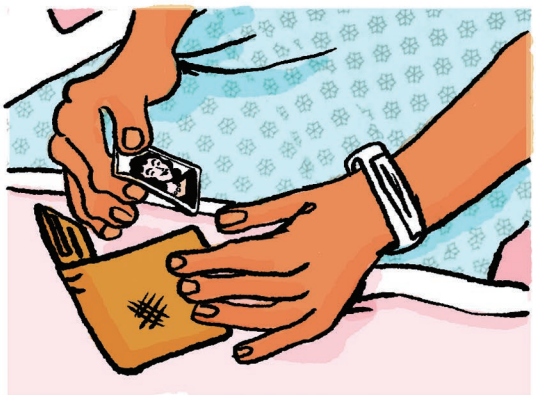
...AND THE SECRETS THAT LURK FOR YEARS WITHIN THE BODY— THE GRUDGES, THE LONGINGS— THEY RUSH OUTWARD IN A FLOOD.

"MY THIRD SON, HE'S KIND OF AN ASSHOLE."



"HE HAD A LIFELONG FEAR OF KITTENS."

"SHE ALWAYS SMELLED LIKE BROWN SUGAR ON A SUNDAY."



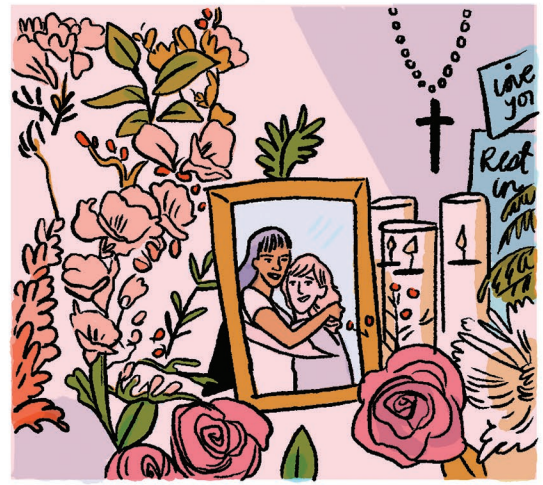
A DYING PERSON HAS STAGE PRESENCE: YOU CAN'T STOP LISTENING.

THAT OLD CHESTNUT: "NO ONE EVER WISHES THEY'D SPENT MORE TIME AT THE OFFICE"? UNTRUE. PLENTY OF PEOPLE REGRET NOT WORKING HARDER, SMARTER – NOT GRABBING A BIGGER SHARE OF THE POT.

THE TELLTALE "GLASSY-EYED LOOK" IS CAUSED BY A BREAKDOWN OF ENDOTHELIAL CELLS AROUND THE CORNEA. DYING EYES SHOOT REELS OF FILM. BUT NOT EMPTY FILM.

RARELY DOES ANYONE GO WITH HARD FEELINGS.

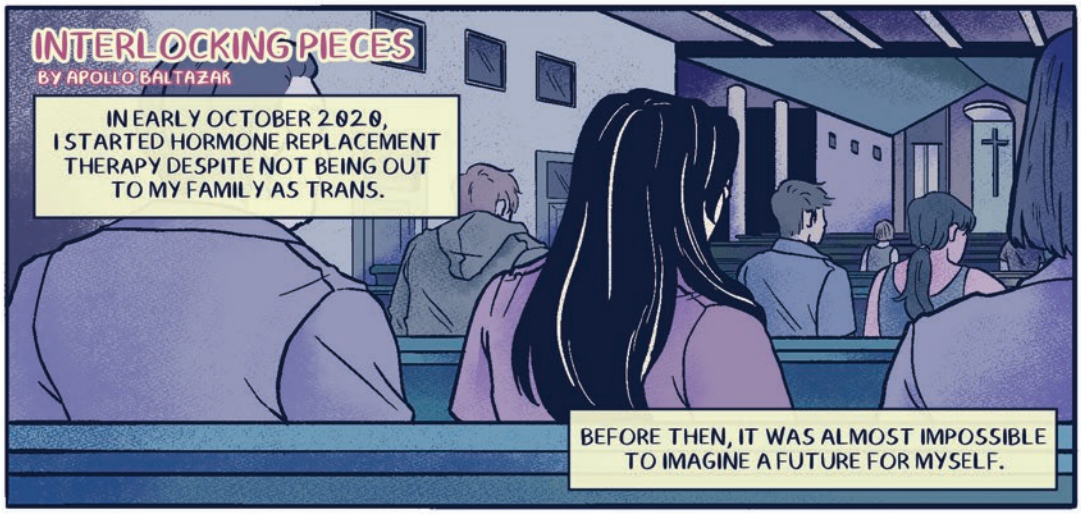
WHAT HAUNTS PEOPLE – ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DEATH EQUATION – IS FAILING TO ADEQUATELY DEMONSTRATE THEIR LOVE.



THEY ONLY WISH THEY HADN'T PLAYED THOSE CARDS SO CLOSE TO THEIR CHEST.

INTERLOCKING PIECES

BY APOLLO BALTAZAR



I WANT BIRTHDAYS WITH MY NAME ON THE CAKE. I WANT TO LOOK AT PHOTOS FROM FAMILY PARTIES AND RECOGNIZE THE PERSON STARING BACK AT ME.
APOLLO
I WANT MY RELATIVES TO CALL ME TITO, KUYA, NINONG.

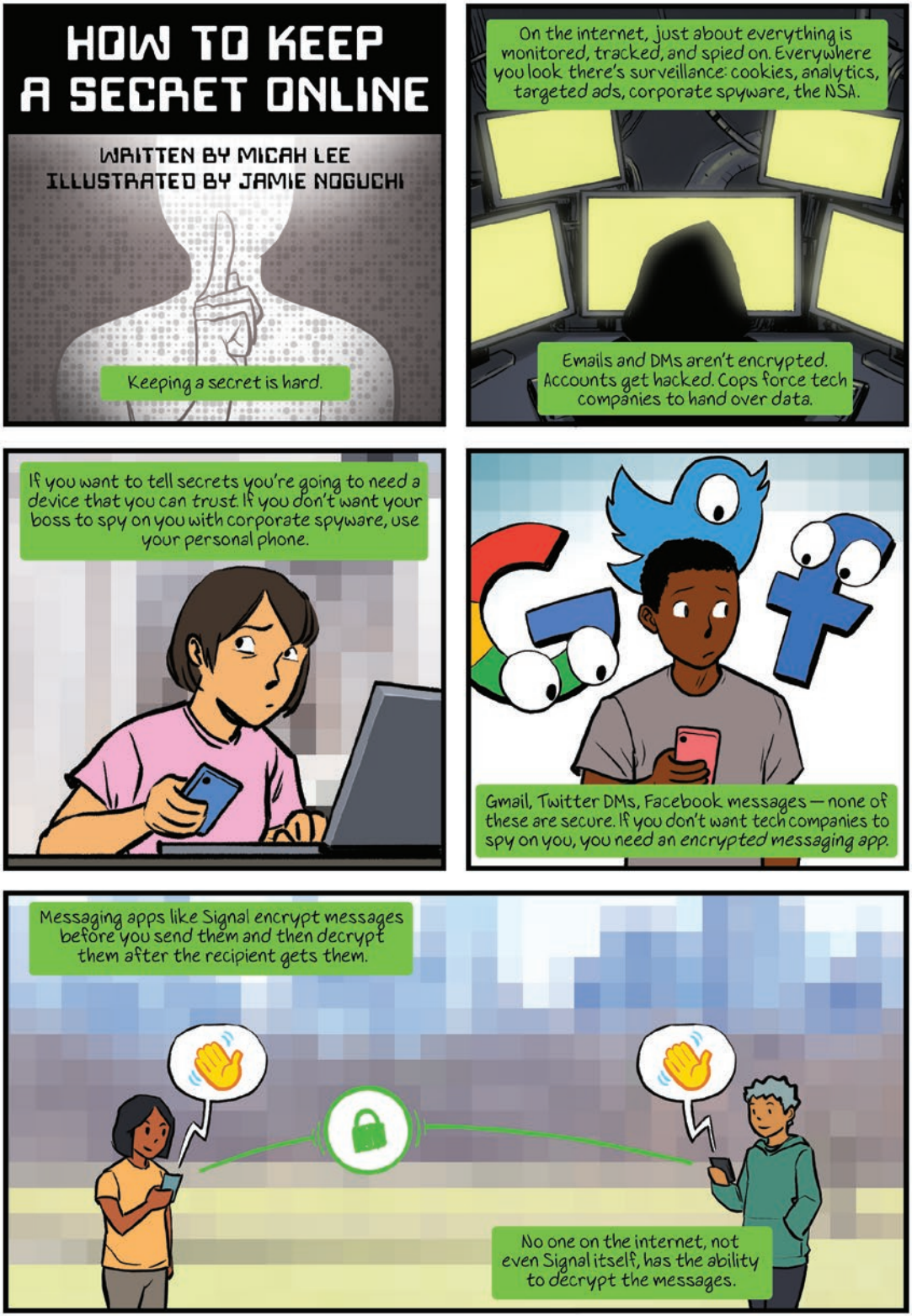
I WANT MY TRANS ACHIEVEMENTS TO BE CELEBRATED AND SUPPORTED WITH THE SAME VIGOR AS MY ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS.

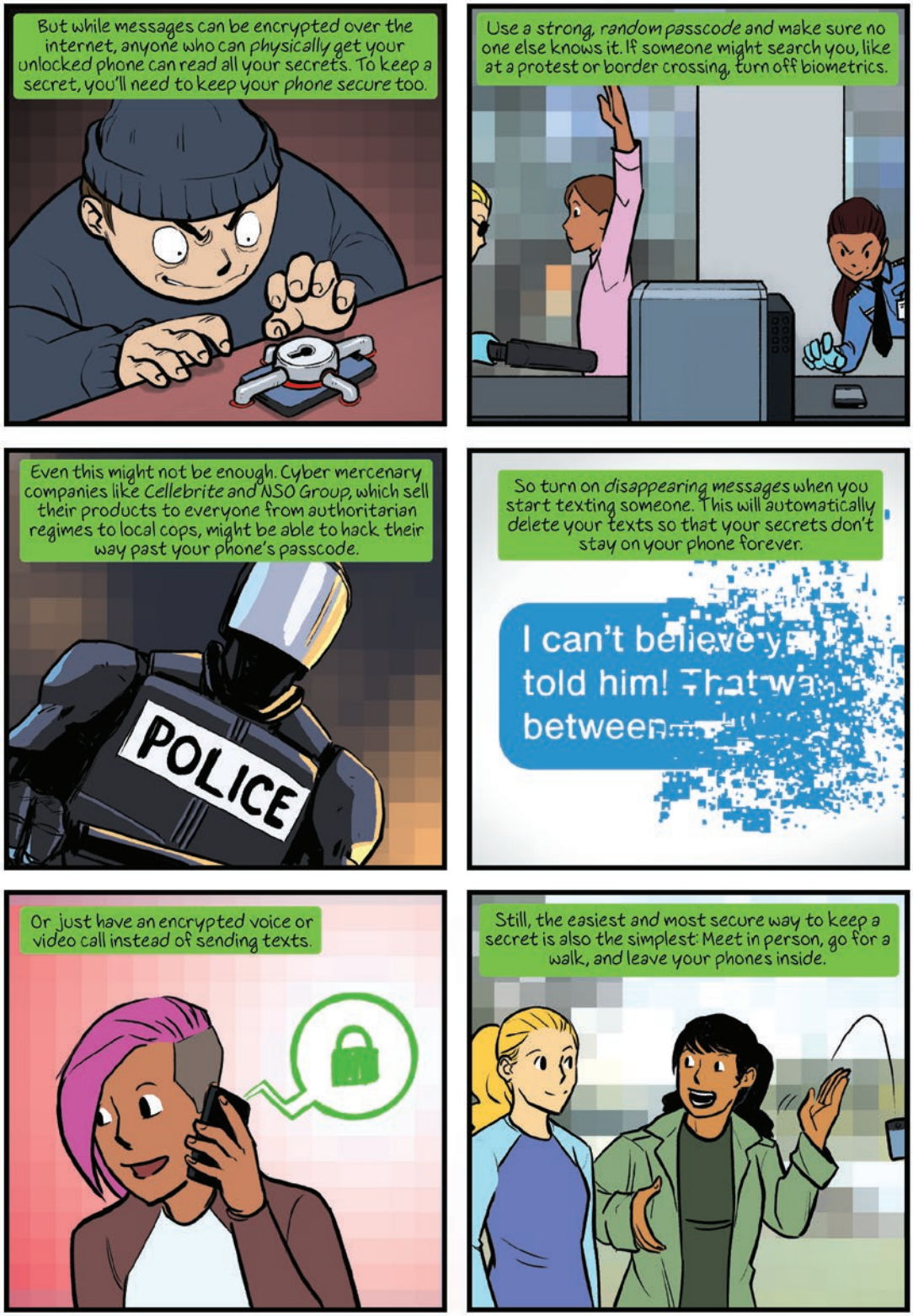
I DON'T NEED TO FOLLOW THAT CONCEPT OF "MODEL MINORITY."
I DON'T EVEN NEED TO BE A MODEL MINORITY WITHIN MY OWN FAMILY.

MY IDENTITY IS ALSO NOT JUST THE PARTS I PUT TOGETHER MYSELF BUT PIECES I'VE RECEIVED FROM THE LOVED ONES AROUND ME—BLOOD FAMILY OR OTHERWISE.
WITHOUT THEM, I WOULDN'T BE WHO I AM RIGHT NOW.

HOW TO KEEP A SECRET ONLINE

WRITTEN BY MICAH LEE
ILLUSTRATED BY JAMIE NOGUCHI




But while messages can be encrypted over the internet, anyone who can physically get your unlocked phone can read all your secrets. To keep a secret, you'll need to keep your phone secure too.
Use a strong, random passcode and make sure no one else knows it. If someone might search you, like at a protest or border crossing, turn off biometrics.
Even this might not be enough. Cyber mercenary companies like Cellebrite and NSO Group, which sell their products to everyone from authoritarian regimes to local cops, might be able to hack their way past your phone's passcode.
POLICE
So turn on disappearing messages when you start texting someone. This will automatically delete your texts so that your secrets don't stay on your phone forever.
I can't believe y
told him! That wa
between
Or just have an encrypted voice or video call instead of sending texts.
Still, the easiest and most secure way to keep a secret is also the simplest: Meet in person, go for a walk, and leave your phones inside.

ISRAEL'S not-so-secret nukes

miriam libicki

When I moved to Israel, my big sister and I took buses all around the country. That's when I learned about the nuclear reactor.

The state secret as a throwaway joke, a secret that Mordechai Vanunu was still sitting in jail for talking about.

The world first learned about Israel's nuclear weapons in 1986. Mordechai Vanunu, a former Dimona technician, smuggled secrets to the British press. He described a plutonium processing program with sufficient material for about 150 nuclear weapons.

Vanunu was subsequently kidnapped by the Mossad, Israel's national intelligence agency, and sentenced to prison.

Israel's program was a Cold War secret. It began in the 1950s with help from France and later the U.S. But neither country wanted to be seen helping Israel nuclearize the region.

* Memorandum to President Nixon (July 19, 1969)

From 1970, the United States no longer pressed Israel to sign the NPT; it also ended the visits at Dimona. In return, Israel is committed to maintaining a low-profile nuclear posture: no **testing**, no declaration, no **acknowledgment**.

*Israel and the Bomb, Columbia University Press (1998)

Vanunu spent 10 years in solitary confinement, and is still barred from emigrating or speaking to the press. But his revelations never had his intended effect of shocking and rallying opinion against the program.

So Israel's nukes were a secret and **not** a secret. And they were a joke, inevitably. ***Everything*** is a joke. Immediately after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, a joke circulated about the imminent assassination of his co-Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shimon Peres.

Who's next in line?

Peres!

When Iran withdrew from the IAEA in 2006, began enriching its uranium, and declared its intention to become a nuclear power over the next decade, Israel's open-secret nuclear arsenal was put into a **new light**.

Is it time to let go of the secret?

If you can't acknowledge it, it looks like something that is **sinful**. Israel is today the **least** transparent nuclear state. It never took moral and national ***responsibility*** for what it did.

PROF. AVNER COHEN

This legal limbo **highlights** the non-democratic and non-normative nature of this bargain.*

*"Israel's Policy of Nuclear Ambiguity Comes Under Fire," *Jerusalem Post* (2010)

In 2007, the Israeli prime minister warned American lawmakers of Iran's nuclear capabilities while waving a photo of **Auschwitz**. Soon after, the pop group Teapacks won Israel's contest for the national Eurovision entry with a catchy tune about **nuclear** apocalypse.

TEAPACKS PUSH THE BUTTON!

The world is full of terror
If someone makes an error
He's gonna blow us up to biddy biddy
kingdom come

This kind of message is ***not appropriate*** for the competition. We'll delegation leaders here next week, and I'm **talk about** this the EBU group.

Some will think it's Israel's crazy leaders, some will think it's the crazy leaders of another country. The commotion is **great** as long as they let us sing the *song* in the end.*

KJELL EKHOLM, EUROVISION ORGANIZER

KOBI OZ, TEAPACKS SINGER

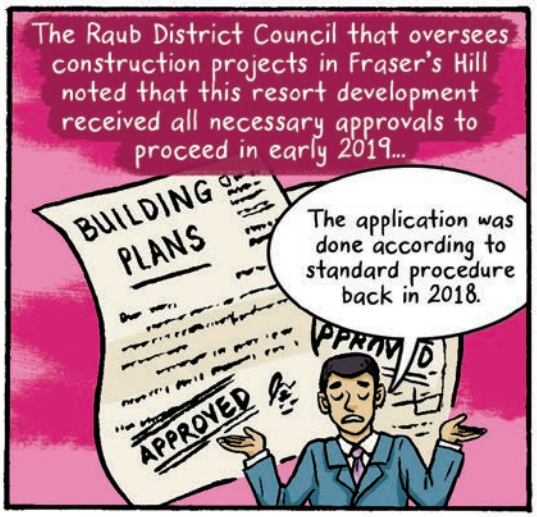
*"Teapacks Pushes the Wrong Button for Eurovision," *Jerusalem Post* (2007)

The song was allowed. It was also Israel's **worst-ranked** performance in decades, and we didn't make the finals. Maybe Israeli irony doesn't **translate**.

Push da button! Push da button!

IF A TREE *FALLS* IN THE FOREST

by Max Loh



...yet the Malaysian Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry was seemingly left in the dark too.
This was not referred or informed earlier to the National Heritage Department or the Pahang offices of the ministry for views or for advice to be sought.
Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture
With all eyes suddenly on this project, a stop work order was issued, but only for old English features to be incorporated into the development's design. Signage detailing plans for the high-rise development was erected at the site.
NEW & IMPROVED
It was a cosmetic problem all along!
We didn't even need an Environmental Impact Assessment!
But residents have already begun to experience the environmental effects of construction work...
I guess the vacationers will get a new water feature at least?
But what about the landslides?
...some of which will be difficult to reverse.
This is home to about 250 species of resident birds and another 15 migratory ones.
K.S. Durai, Fraser's Hill Nature Guide
If the forest is gone...
...they will not come back here.

I WAS THE STRAIGHT GIRL'S SECRET
BY SAGE COFFEY
AS A KID, BEING QUEER WAS NORMAL TO ME. MY UNCLE IS GAY, MY MOM HAD GAY FRIENDS OVER ALL THE TIME, IT WAS A VERY QUEER-FRIENDLY HOUSEHOLD.
WHEN I ASKED OUT A GIRL IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, I THOUGHT IT WAS NORMAL UNTIL I SAW HER REACTION...
IT WASN'T OF HORROR, BUT OF SECRECY.
YES, BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE WE'RE DATING!
I WAS INFATUATED! IT WAS FINE TO BE HER SECRET. WE'D HOLD HANDS AND KISS AND HAVE SLEEPOVERS ALL THE TIME.
...THAT IS, UNLESS SOMEONE WAS LOOKING.
I CUT MY HAIR SHORT AND SUDDENLY A LIGHT SWITCH WENT OFF IN EVERYONE'S HEAD, INCLUDING MY THEN GIRLFRIEND'S.

SHE TOLD EVERYONE ABOUT HOW I WAS A BIG DYKE AND SHARED ALL THE THINGS WE DID TOGETHER!
WE WEREN'T EVEN REALLY DATING. IT WAS A PRANK!
I WAS BULLIED RELENTLESSLY FOR IT WHILE SHE LAUGHED WITH THE OTHER STRAIGHT FOLKS ABOUT HOW SHE OUTED ME. BUT IT WASN'T MY SECRET THAT SHE TOLD.
IT WAS HERS.
YEARS LATER, SHE CAME OUT AS GAY, AND I'M HAPPY SHE DID!
I JUST WISH THAT BACK THEN I WASN'T A CASUALTY OF HER SHAME.

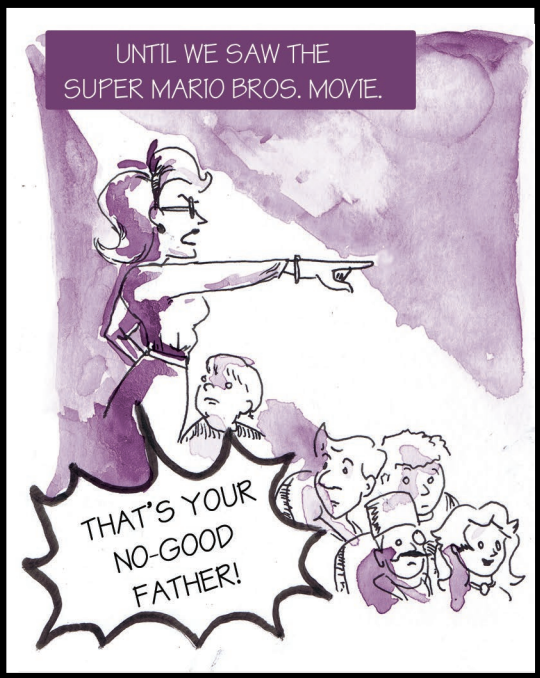
ABAKUÁ SECRET SOCIETY
IN EARLY-19TH-CENTURY CUBA, ENSLAVED WEST AFRICAN MEN FORMED A SECRET SOCIETY CALLED ABAKUÁ TO PROVIDE AID AND PROTECTION TO THEIR MEMBERS. THEY USE THE LEOPARD AS THEIR SYMBOL, DENOTING MASCULINE PROWESS IN WAR AND POLITICAL AUTHORITY. IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE MEMBERS, ÑÁÑIGOS, COULD TRANSFORM INTO LEOPARDS TO STALK ENEMIES.
GREENSTONE '21

THE RESPONSE

Each issue we ask four cartoonists one question. For this Response we wanted to know: What's your family secret?

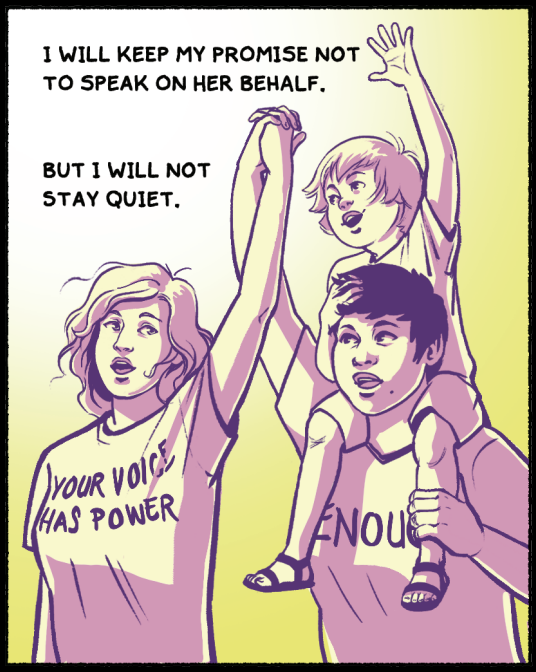
Illustration by Eleri Harris

John Leavitt



Edward Flynn

Anonymous & Aki Ruiz

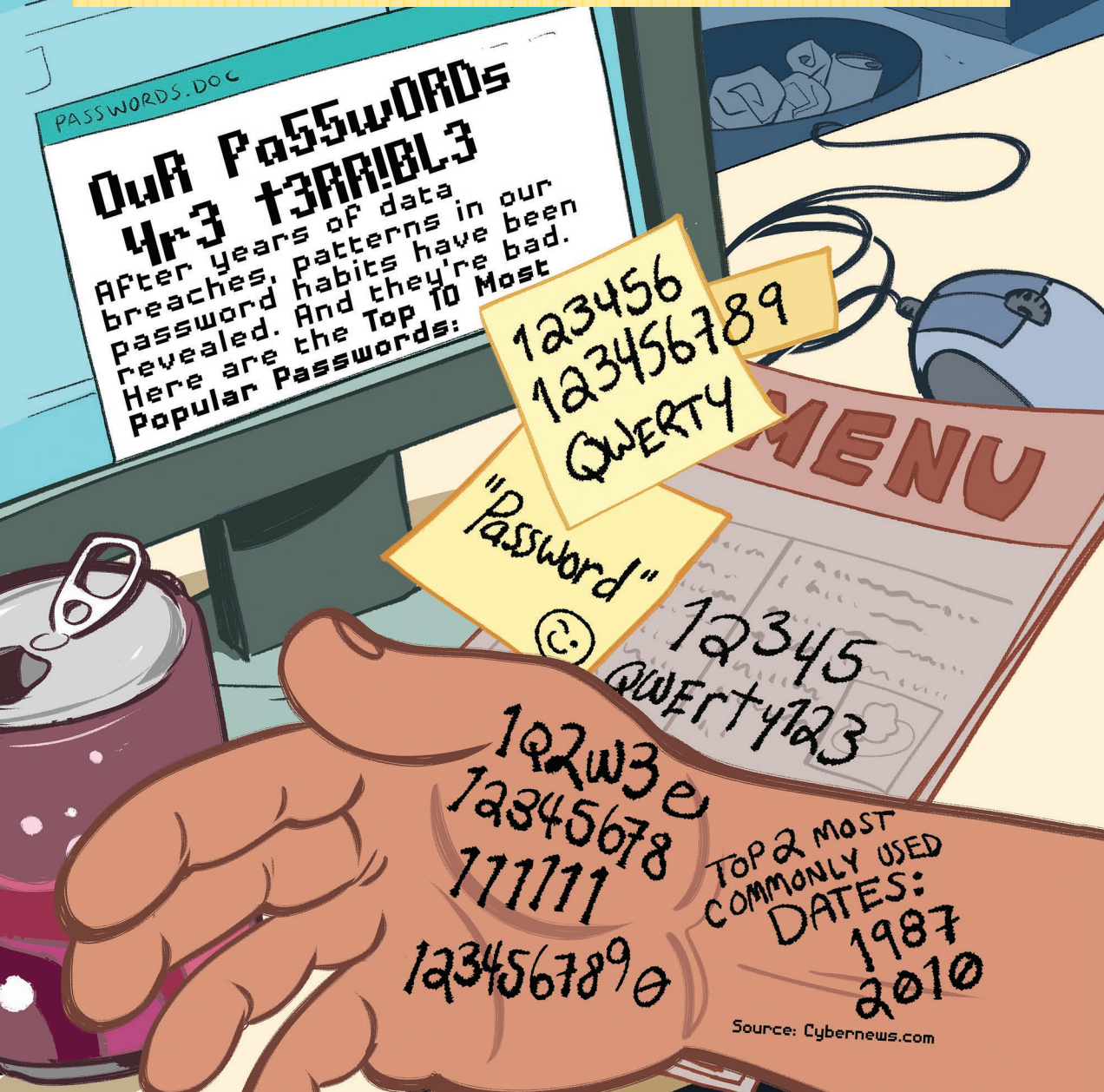


Eleri Harris

The Nib Bureau of Statistics

[redacted] *secrets* [redacted] *skeletons* [redacted] *closets,* [redacted] *passwords* [redacted] *desires* [redacted] *power* [redacted] *money.*

Illustrated By Maki Naro



SPYFARE

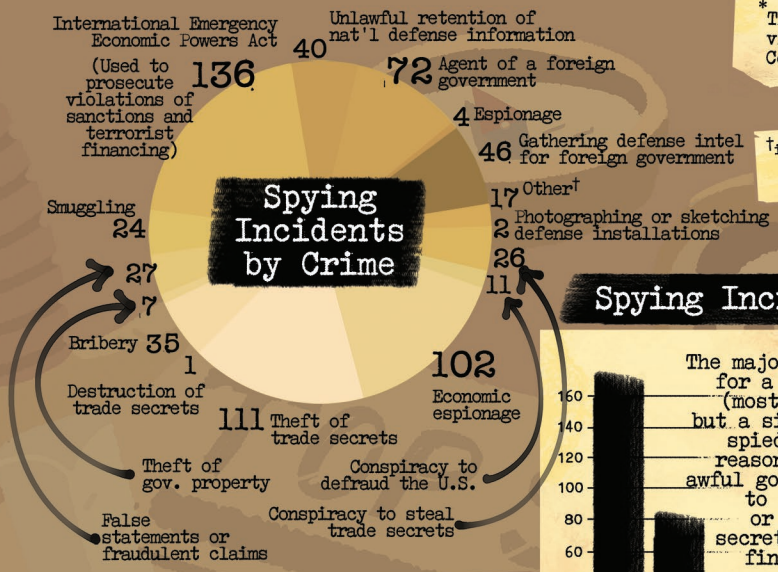
From 1990 to 2019, 670* spies were identified operating inside the United States.

41.1 percent of spies engaged in state espionage, and 58.9 percent engaged in commercial espionage.

*This figure excludes the 815 violators of the Arms Export Control Act (gun smuggling).

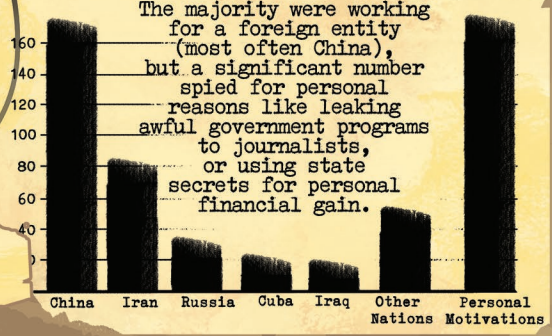
†includes everything from filing a false tax return to conspiring to produce nuclear material outside of the U.S.

Spying Incidents by Crime



Spying Incidents by Country

The majority were working for a foreign entity (most often China), but a significant number spied for personal reasons like leaking awful government programs to journalists, or using state secrets for personal financial gain.



Many spies are deported, exchanged, or serve incomplete sentences as political winds change.

Notable Spies Still Held in American Prisons

Year Sentenced and Prison Terms

China

Brian P. Regan
2003
Life Sentence

Noshir Gowadia
2011
32 Years

Jerry Chun Shing Lee
2019
19 Years

Cuba

Kendall Myers
2010
Life Sentence

Ana Montes
2002
25 Years

Russia

Peter Debbins
2021
15 Years

Aldrich Ames
1994
Life Sentence

Robert Hanssen
2001
Life Sentence

H.J. Nicholson
1997 & 2011
31 Years Total

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Defense, Cato Institute

SECRET HISTORIES

A GRAPHIC GUIDE TO THE UNDECIPHERED WRITING SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD*

*THAT WE KNOW ABOUT!

VINČA SYMBOLS
ROMANIA ~6,000 BCE
ALEKANOVO INSCRIPTION
RUSSIA ~1000 CE
DISPILIO TABLET
GREECE ~5,000 BCE
KHITAN LARGE SCRIPT
CHINA ~900 CE
ISSYK INSCRIPTION
KAZAKHSTAN ~400 BCE
SIDETIC
TURKEY ~300 BCE
LINEAR A
GREECE ~1,800 BCE
ELAMITE
IRAN ~300 BCE
BYBLOS SYLLABARY
LEBANON ~1,800 BCE
JIAHU SYMBOLS
CHINA ~6,000 BCE
MEROITIC SCRIPT
SUDAN ~300 BCE
VIKRAMKHOL CAVE INSCRIPTION
INDIA ~1,500 BCE
INDUS SCRIPT
PAKISTAN ~3,500 BCE
SHANKHALIPI
INDIA ~400 CE
SINGAPORE STONE
SINGAPORE ~1,100 CE

SECRET HOARDS

THE WORLD OF PERSONAL OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS OF THE GLOBAL ELITE WHO RUN OUR COUNTRIES AND BIGGEST COMPANIES MOSTLY REMAINS HIDDEN, BUT EVERY SO OFTEN A HUGE DATA LEAK TO JOURNALISTS SHEDS LIGHT ON SOME OF ITS DARK CORNERS.

Countries With Implicated Political Elites

Panama Papers
Paradise Papers
Both

Secret Financial Data Leaks

BY SIZE IN GIGABYTES

Panama Papers (2016)
EXPOSED THE HIDDEN MONEY POTS OF **143** POLITICIANS, INCLUDING **12** NATIONAL LEADERS.

2600 GB

4 GB
Luxembourg Leaks (2014)

260 GB
Offshore Leaks (2013)

3.3 GB
Swiss Leaks/ HSBC Files (2015)

1400 GB

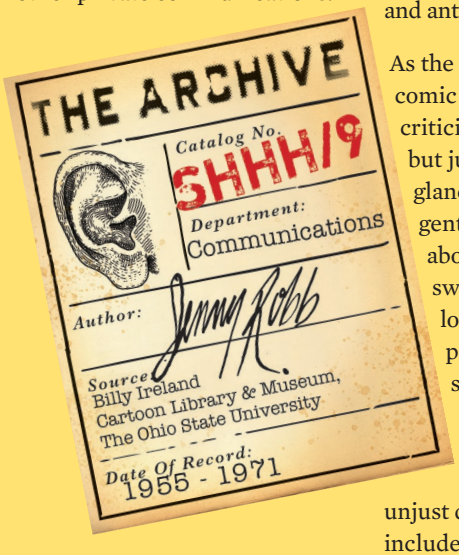
Paradise Papers (2017)
REVEALED THE CLANDESTINE FINANCIAL DEALINGS OF **120** POLITICIANS (INCLUDING QUEEN ELIZABETH!) AND **100** MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS (INCLUDING APPLE).

Source: International Consortium of Investigative Journalists

FOUNDED BY DEATH-OBSESSED CHICAGO JOURNALISTS IN 1889, THE WHITECHAPEL CLUB WAS A SECRET SOCIETY OBSESSED WITH JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MACABRE. MEMBERS DRANK OUT OF HUMAN SKULLS AT A BAR FASHIONED FROM A COFFIN. THE DECOR OF THE CLUB CONSISTED OF ARTIFACTS AND PARAPHERNALIA THAT CAME FROM REAL MURDERS AND WAS GIVEN TO THEM BY CHICAGO POLICEMEN. GUESTS INCLUDED THE LIKES OF FUTURE PRESIDENTS THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND WILLIAM MCKINLEY. THE CLUB CONTINUED ITS MURDER-OBSESSED DEBAUCHERY FOR FIVE YEARS BEFORE IT DISBANDED DUE TO OVER POPULARITY.
"I TOO HAVE LIVED IN ARCADY!"
THE WHITECHAPEL CLUB
URN

Keeping Taps

Does the United States government have the right to eavesdrop on its own citizens to keep the country safe from its enemies, either at home or abroad? This issue frequently bubbled to the surface during the Cold War, when the threat of communism provided an excuse for the federal government to spy on its own citizens in the name of national security. Various agencies including the FBI, CIA, NSA, and the Department of Defense have a long history of intercepting telegrams, phone calls, mail, and other private communications.



A Supreme Court ruling in 1928 held that phone-tapping did not violate the Fourth Amendment banning illegal search and seizure, as long as the authorities did not encroach on the individual's physical property, but in 1967, that ruling was overturned and required the government to obtain a warrant for wiretapping activities.

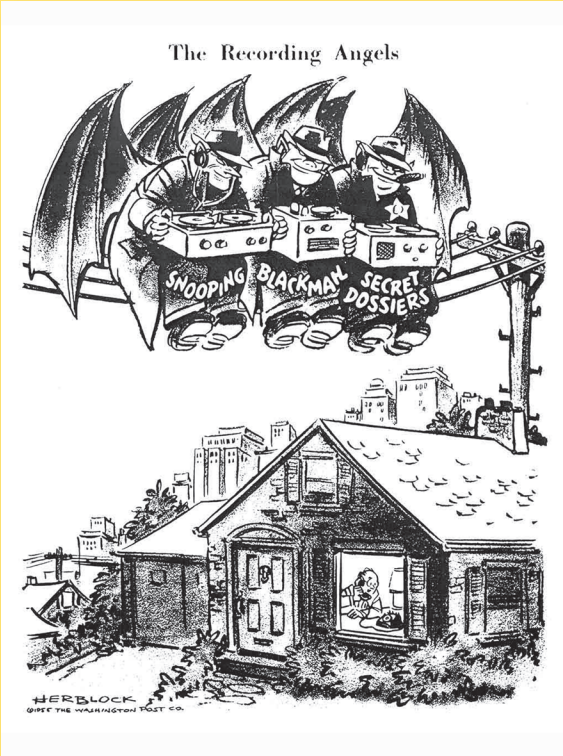
Two cartoonists working in two different genres repeatedly satirized the U.S. government's domestic surveillance efforts during the Cold War: Herblock and Walt Kelly. From his influential position as *The Washington Post*'s editorial cartoonist, Herblock criticized multiple administrations for investigating private citizens for the purposes of political gain, including spying on civil rights and anti–Vietnam War activists.

As the creator of the newspaper comic strip *Pogo*, Kelly's criticism was less direct, but just as effective. At first glance, *Pogo* appeared to be a gentle, funny-animal feature about a motley group of swamp critters, but a closer look reveals his pointed political satire. In this 1971 story line, Kelly skewers FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and the Nixon administration for its unjust domestic spying, which included wiretapping in the name of national security. Kelly depicted Hoover as a bulldog wearing an overcoat and fedora.

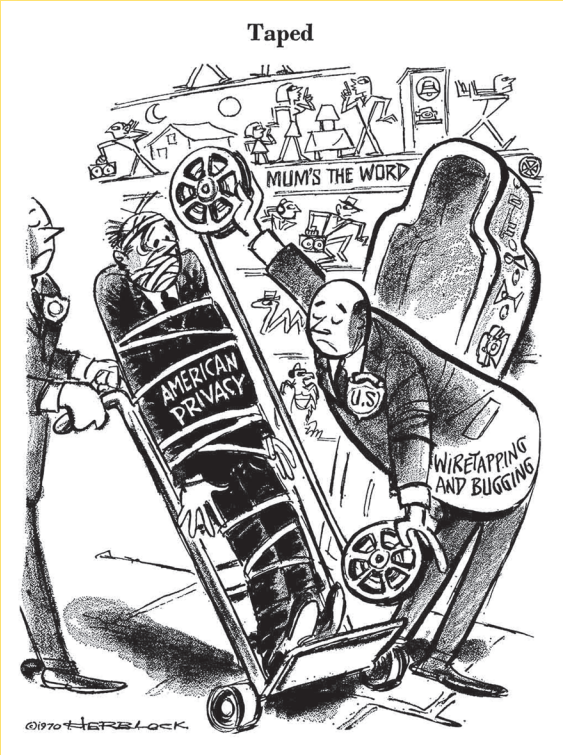
Vice President Spiro Agnew was caricatured as a hyena in military regalia, a spoof of the unpopular new uniforms for the White House guards introduced at Nixon's behest in January 1971. Attorney General John Mitchell, who argued that wiretaps ordered by his office in the interests of national security should not require court authorization, is depicted as a pipe-smoking eagle.

Cartoonists like Herblock and Kelly helped bring these secret surveillance activities of the government to the attention of the public. After extensive Senate investigations, Congress passed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, which attempted to provide more effective oversight over foreign and domestic spying. It has been repeatedly amended, especially since 9/11, and the right balance between privacy and security continues to be a frequently debated topic.

Jenny Robb
Cartoon Curator at the Ohio State University Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum.



Herblock
"The Recording Angels,"
The Washington Post
(March 14, 1955)



Herblock
"Taped,"
The Washington Post
(January 18, 1970)

Walt Kelly "Pogo,"
Top: *The Washington Post* (July 21, 1971)
Bottom: *The Washington Post* (September 4, 1971)

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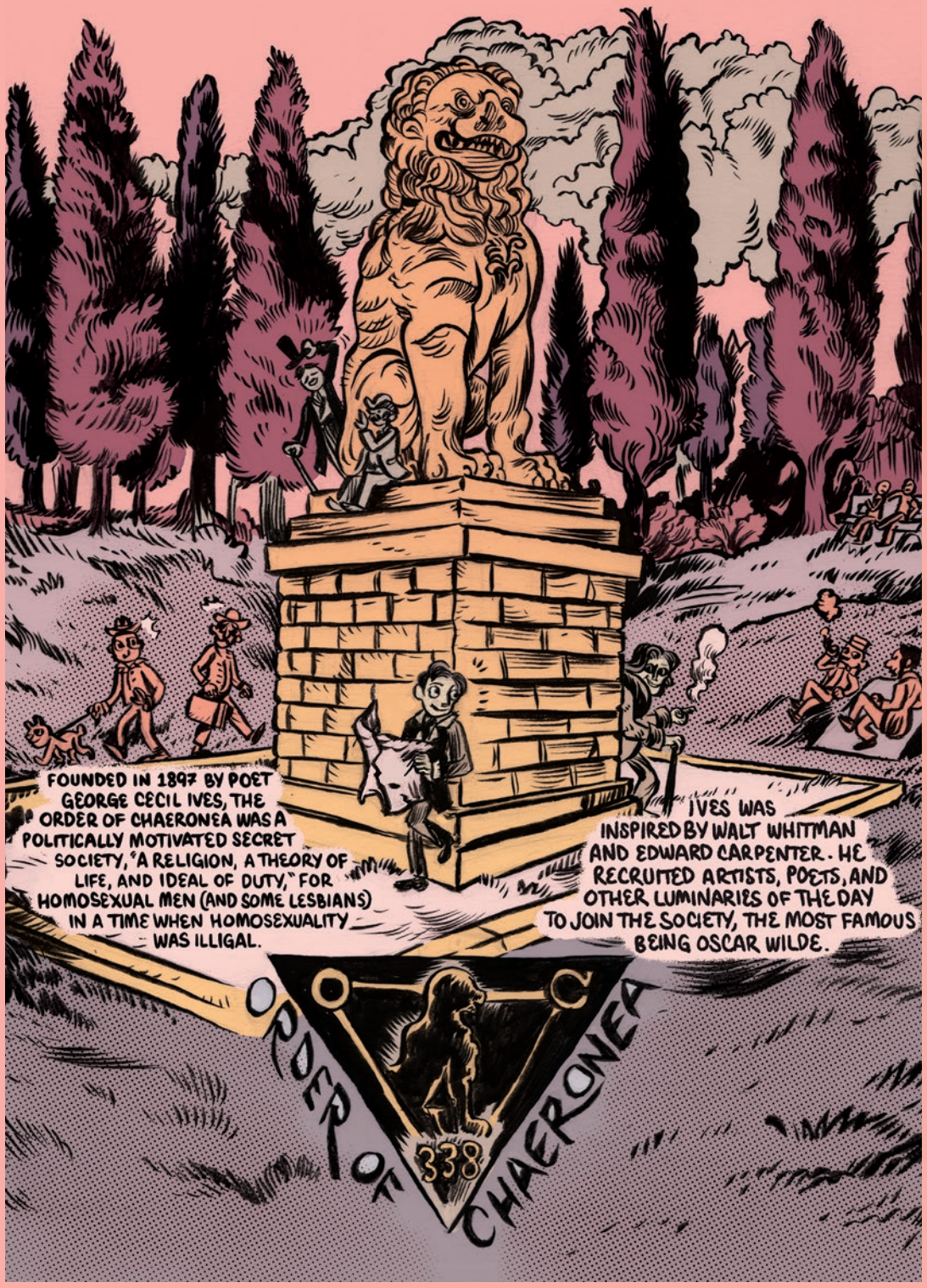
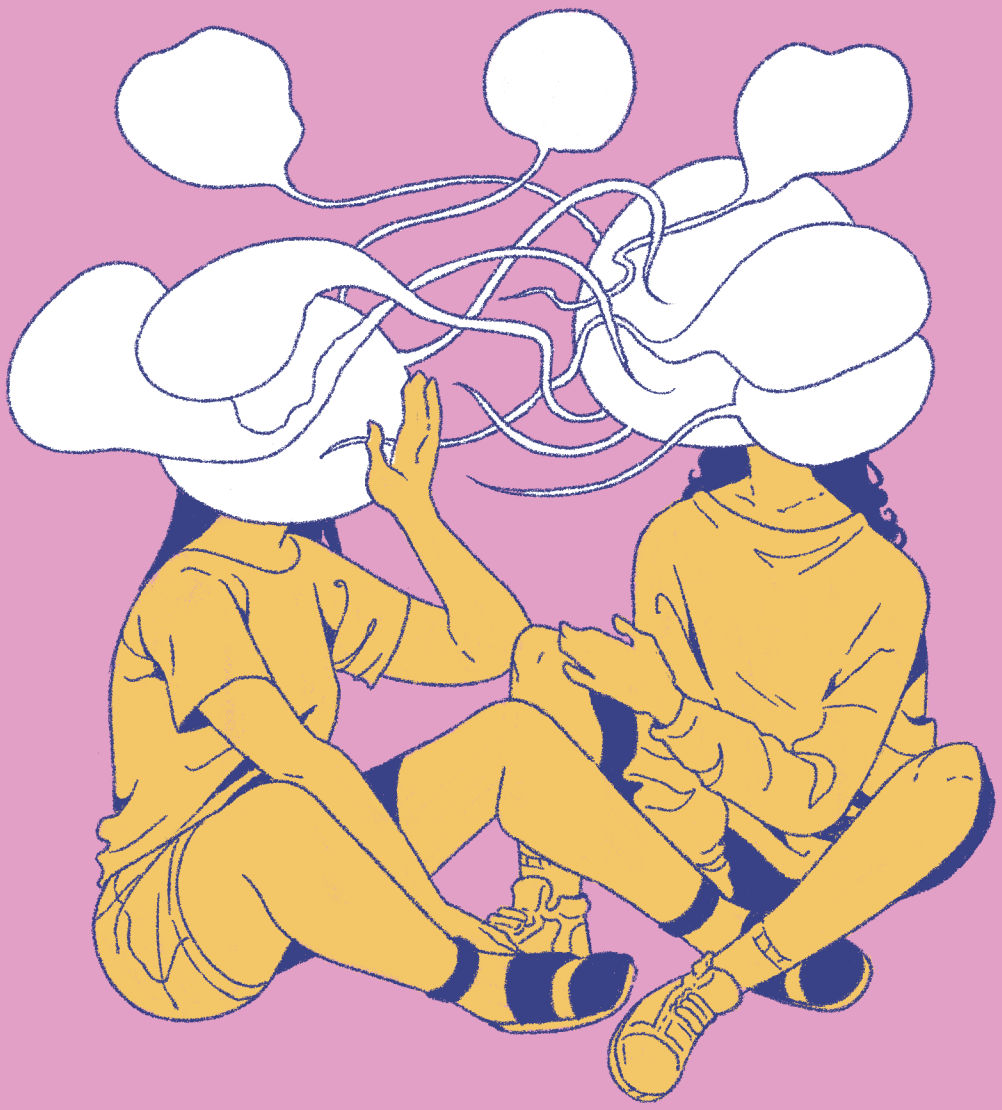

FOUNDED IN 1897 BY POET GEORGE CECIL IVES, THE ORDER OF CHAERONEA WAS A POLITICALLY MOTIVATED SECRET SOCIETY, "A RELIGION, A THEORY OF LIFE, AND IDEAL OF DUTY," FOR HOMOSEXUAL MEN (AND SOME LESBIANS) IN A TIME WHEN HOMOSEXUALITY WAS ILLIGAL.
IVES WAS INSPIRED BY WALT WHITMAN AND EDWARD CARPENTER. HE RECRUITED ARTISTS, POETS, AND OTHER LUMINARIES OF THE DAY TO JOIN THE SOCIETY, THE MOST FAMOUS BEING OSCAR WILDE.
ORDER OF CHAERONEA
338



Paper Fictions Social Realities

Meg O'Shea

FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS, I'VE BEEN ENGAGED IN A HISTORICAL RESEARCH PROJECT, THE SUBJECT OF WHICH...
IS ME.
SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS
INITIAL SOCIAL HISTORY
SUPREME COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
ADOPTIVE PARENTS — CHILD

IT HAS INVOLVED A NUMBER OF SOURCES, FROM MY HOME COUNTRY OF AUSTRALIA AND BIRTH COUNTRY OF KOREA...
용산구청
가족관계증명서
KOR → ENG
가족사항:
기록할 사항이 없습니다.
Family information:
Nothing to record
ONE ADOPTION AGENCY APPOINTMENT...
I must cover your parents' names.
ONE MOUTH SWAB...
THREE TELEGRAMS, A LETTER...
There has been no response from your mother. We will have to close the case.
AND A TWO-YEAR STINT OF LIVING IN SEOUL.
I can't believe we're leaving.
I feel like I've gotten fucking nothing.

RAISED BY WHITE AUSTRALIAN PARENTS, FOR A LOT OF MY LIFE I HAD ACTIVELY AVOIDED QUESTIONS OF MY IDENTITY OR ITS ORIGINS.
EVENTUALLY I FIGURED IF THIS WAS A PART OF ME NO ONE ELSE WOULD LET ME FORGET...
"Meg" is a funny name for a Chinese girl. What's your real name?
Um... Well, my legal name's "Meeghan"...
BUT REGARDLESS OF MY FEELINGS ON THE MATTER, IT SEEMED OTHERS WERE ALWAYS KEEN TO BRING IT UP.
Isn't it sad that you've lost your roots?
BLOODY TOURIST!
Do you miss your real mum?
Why are you offended? You said you weren't really Asian!
No, sweetheart, what's your
REAL
NAME?
... THEN MAYBE IT WAS TIME I ADDRESS IT MYSELF.

I BEGAN BY JOINING A KOREAN ADOPTEE FACEBOOK GROUP, WHERE I QUICKLY REALIZED I WAS FAR FROM ALONE IN THIS PROJECT.

The caseworker from my agency says she can't share my records with me... is this right?

I need help translating my adoption records. Any Korean speakers here?

Anyone heard of this hospital? I think I was born there.

Can someone tell me what my Korean name means?

I found this picture of my foster mom! Did anyone else have her?

WHILE IT WAS ONE THING TO KNOW THAT AN ESTIMATED 200,000 CHILDREN WERE ADOPTED FROM KOREA AFTER THE END OF THE KOREAN WAR IN 1953...

You can submit a profile here:

Kim Soo-Young

KADOPTION.OR.KR
Adoptees searching for birth families

IT WAS ANOTHER THING ENTIRELY TO SEE HOW MANY OF US, NOW ADULTS, WERE GRASPING AT STRAWS IN ORDER TO KNOW OURSELVES.

Looking for my birth parents

Want to mother

Searching for any family

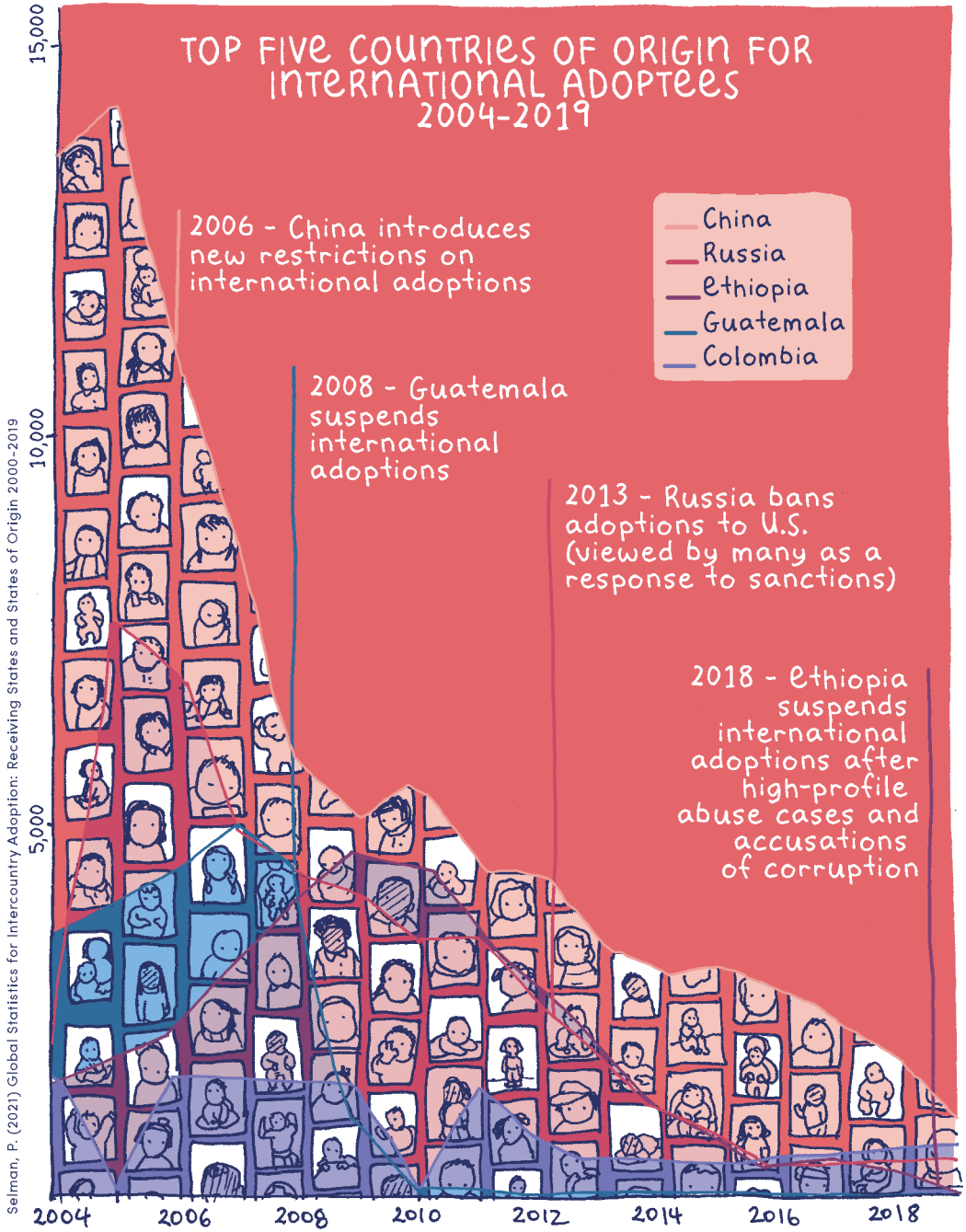
Do you know me?

FOR THE FIRST TIME, I BEGAN TO PROPERLY UNDERSTAND THE GREAT COMPLEXITY AND ENORMITY...

Yeon-Seo

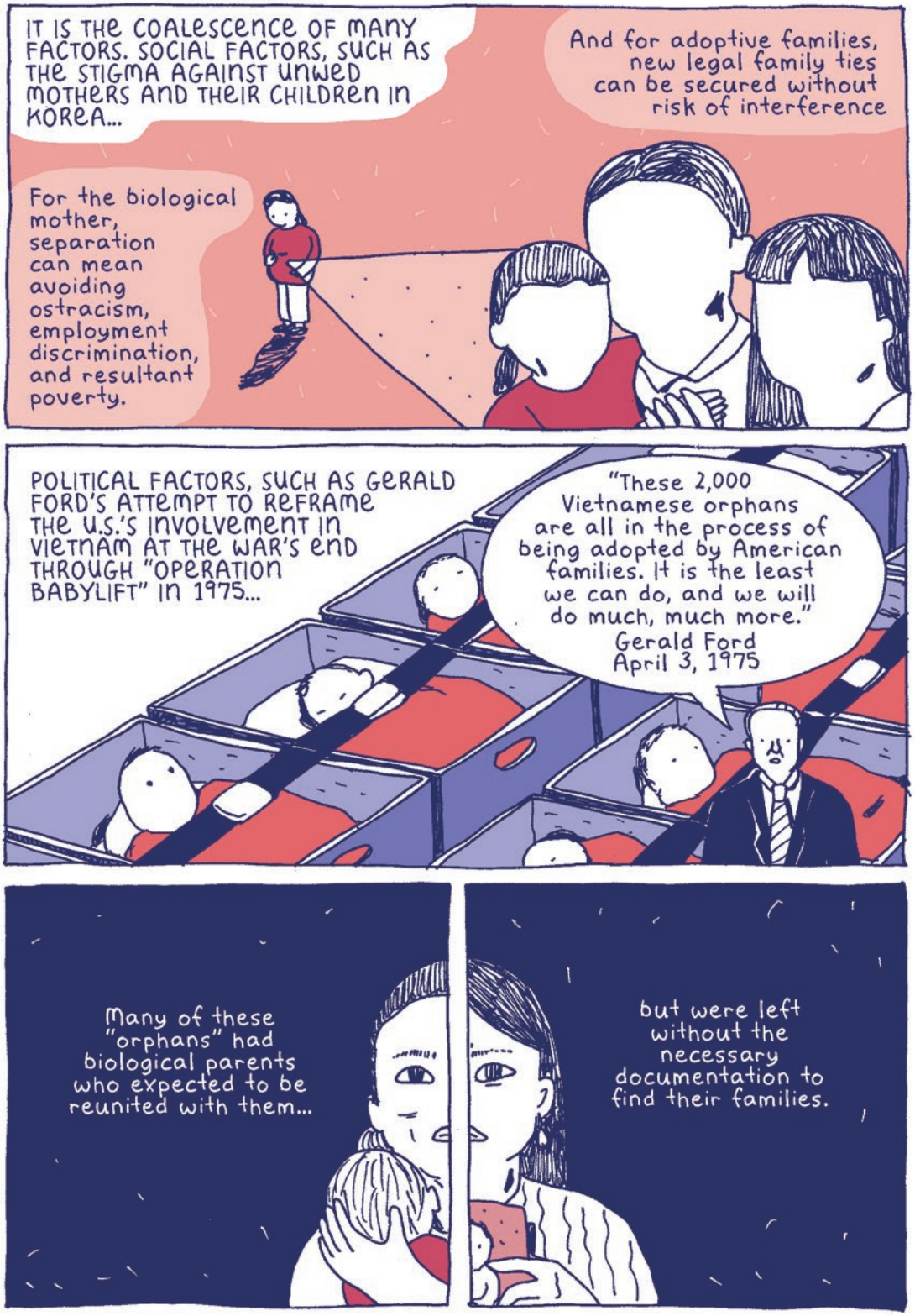
OF THIS PROGRAM THAT HAD TRANSFERRED 200,000 LIVES BETWEEN FAMILIES, COUNTRIES, AND CULTURES WITH THE STROKE OF A PEN.

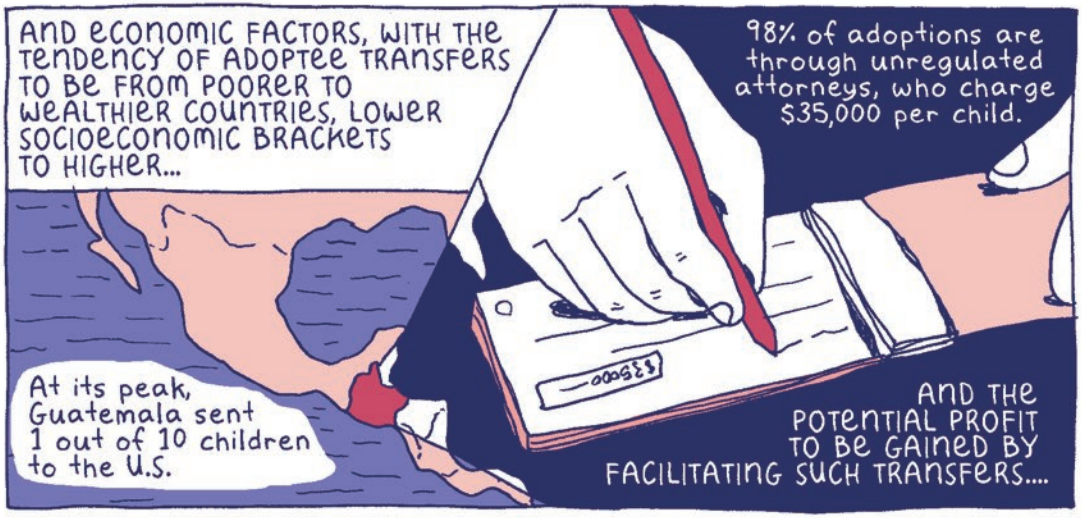
WHILE THE OVERALL NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS IS IN DECLINE, THOUSANDS STILL OCCUR EACH YEAR.

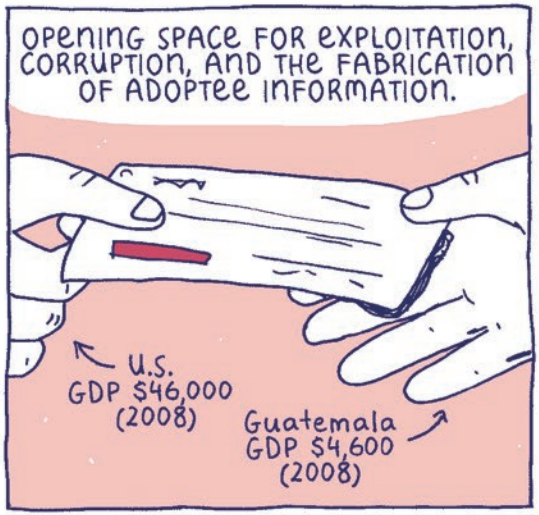


Selman, P. (2021) Global Statistics for Intercountry Adoption: Receiving States and States of Origin 2000-2019

AND THE SAME CULTURE OF SECRECY THAT DENIED GENERATIONS OF ADOPTEES ACCESS TO THEIR ORIGINS IS AT RISK OF PERSISTING.


IT IS THE COALESCENCE OF MANY FACTORS. SOCIAL FACTORS, SUCH AS THE STIGMA AGAINST UNWED MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN IN KOREA...
And for adoptive families, new legal family ties can be secured without risk of interference
For the biological mother, separation can mean avoiding ostracism, employment discrimination, and resultant poverty.
POLITICAL FACTORS, SUCH AS GERALD FORD'S ATTEMPT TO REFRAME THE U.S.'S INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM AT THE WAR'S END THROUGH "OPERATION BABYLIFT" IN 1975...
"These 2,000 Vietnamese orphans are all in the process of being adopted by American families. It is the least we can do, and we will do much, much more."
Gerald Ford
April 3, 1975
Many of these "orphans" had biological parents who expected to be reunited with them...
but were left without the necessary documentation to find their families.


AND ECONOMIC FACTORS, WITH THE TENDENCY OF ADOPTEE TRANSFERS TO BE FROM POORER TO WEALTHIER COUNTRIES, LOWER SOCIOECONOMIC BRACKETS TO HIGHER...
98% of adoptions are through unregulated attorneys, who charge $35,000 per child.
At its peak, Guatemala sent 1 out of 10 children to the U.S.
AND THE POTENTIAL PROFIT TO BE GAINED BY FACILITATING SUCH TRANSFERS....


OPENING SPACE FOR EXPLOITATION, CORRUPTION, AND THE FABRICATION OF ADOPTEE INFORMATION.
U.S. GDP $46,000 (2008)
Guatemala GDP $4,600 (2008)

A 2007 Hague investigation into Guatemala revealed: Women getting pregnant in order to sell their child for adoption and support their families.

The drugging of new mothers to take their newborns.

The kidnapping of children and the rewriting of their histories to "orphan" them and make them adoptable.

THE DIFFICULTIES ADOPTEES SEEKING ANSWERS FACE ARE FURTHER COMPOUNDED BY THE DOMINANT NARRATIVE OF ADOPTION AS AN ACT OF CHILD WELFARE.
FROM ADOPTION PIONEERS...
"... deliver His little children from the cold and misery and darkness of Korea...
Harry Holt, cofounder of the world's first large-scale international adoption agency, 1955
TO PRESIDENTS...
"Children belong in a family, where they can be cared for..."
Pres. Ronald Reagan's proclamation of "National Adoption Week," a response to the large number of children in foster care, 1986
TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS.
"... the ravages of sin have warred against infants and children..."
"On Adoption and Orphan Care," a resolution of the Southern Baptist Convention AGM 2009, part of a push by evangelical churches to encourage adoption
THIS NARRATIVE FRAMES THE ADOPTEE AS A PERPETUAL FORTUNATE CHILD, LEAVING LITTLE ROOM FOR THE COMPLEXITIES OF WHAT PRECEDED ADOPTION...
OR ANY CONTRARY EXPERIENCES THEY MIGHT HAVE AFTER.

A LITTLE BEFORE MY TWO YEARS IN KOREA, I JOINED ANOTHER ADOPTEE GROUP. THIS ONE WAS DOMINATED BY FEMALE CHINESE ADOPTEES IN THEIR LATE TEENS TO MID-TWENTIES.

Fuck, I feel old.

CHINA IS NOW THE BIGGEST SOURCE OF CHILDREN FOR INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION.

Our China Adoption Story

LUCY'S GOTCHA DAY!

6 week update! | Chi

China's One Child Policy facts

Started 1980

#china #adoption #story #an

ITS NUMBERS ARE THE RESULT OF CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION PROGRAM, BEGUN IN 1992, AS PART OF THE COUNTRY'S "OPENING UP" TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY.

IN THIS GROUP, I SEE SO MANY TAKING PART IN THE SAME PAINFUL, FRUSTRATING PROJECT THAT I HAD.

I want to wear a qipao out, but I kinda feel like an imposter.

I think my mom's upset I want to learn about my birth culture...

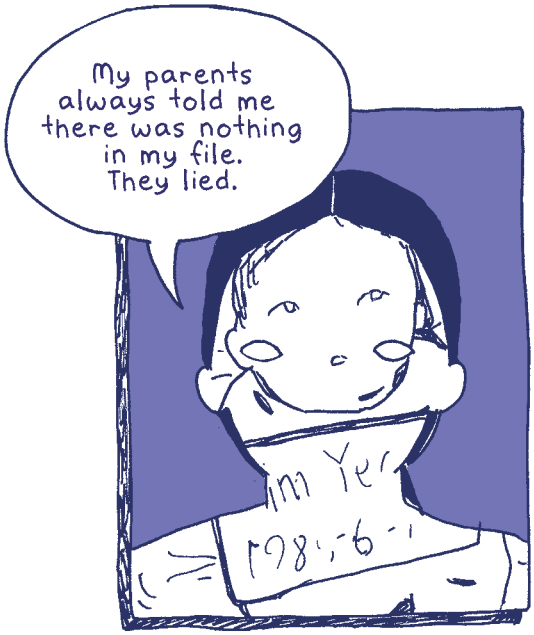
Does anyone feel like their adoption's had a negative impact on their mental health?

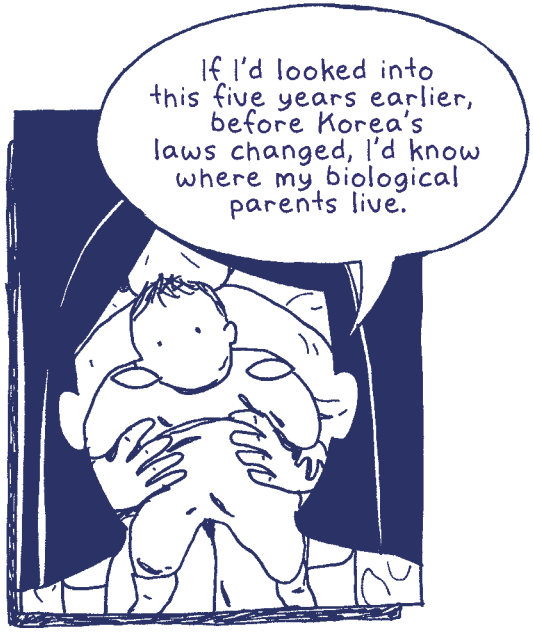
How do I start finding birth family?

THAT I STILL AM.

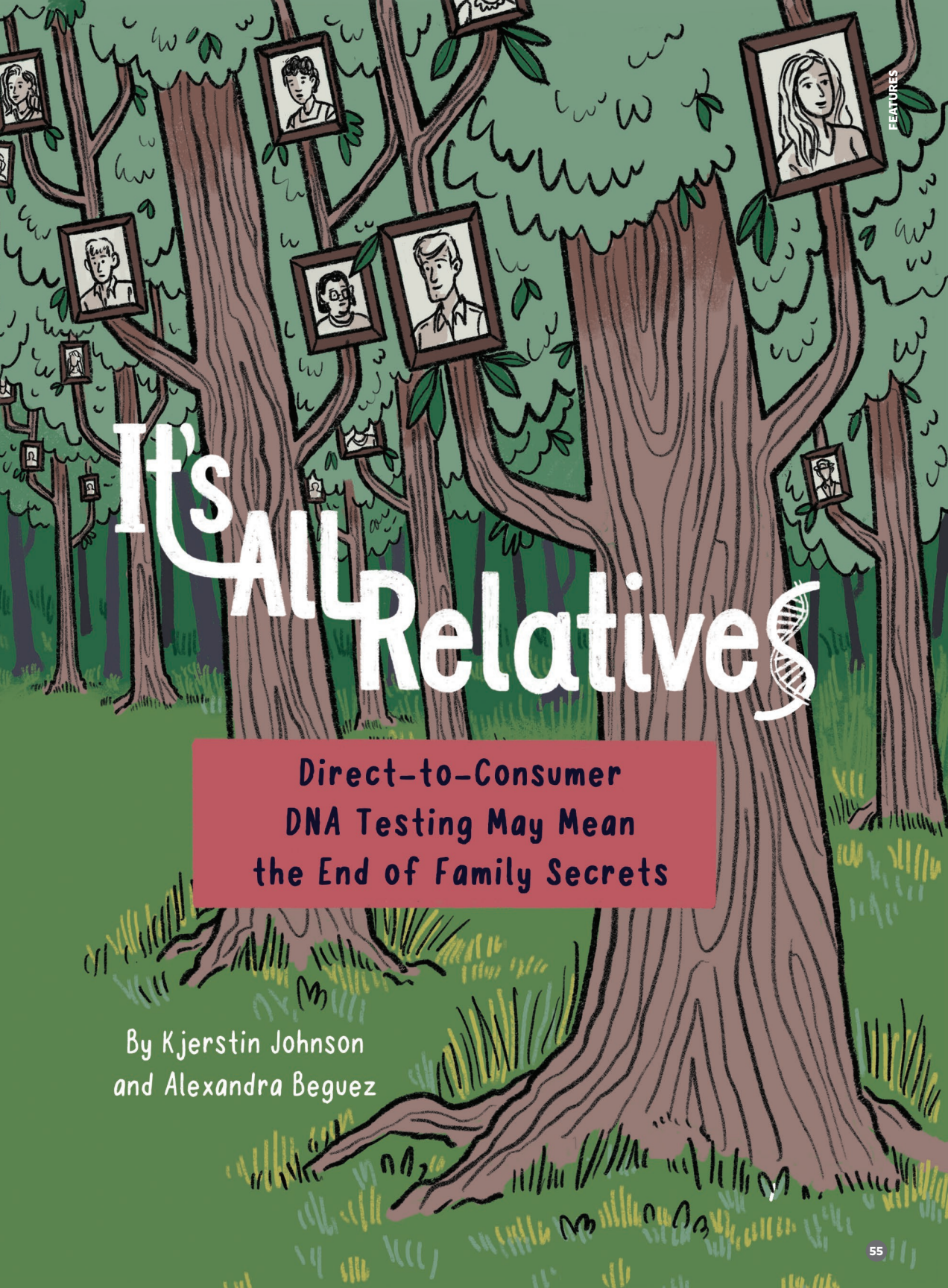
AS TIME PROGRESSES, THE RIGHTS OF ADOPTEES TO THEIR OWN HISTORIES SEEM INCREASINGLY ACKNOWLEDGED.
60 to 70% of U.S. adoptions are now open
February 2021: An amendment to German adoption law is introduced, specifically mentioning the benefit to adoptees of knowing their origins.
May 2021: After decades of forced adoptions, Ireland takes steps to grant adoptees the legal right to their records.
HOWEVER, THE FRAUGHT HISTORY OF ADOPTION...

...STILL LEAVES THOUSANDS KEPT FROM THEIR ORIGINS BY LEGAL, POLITICAL, AND INTERPERSONAL BARRIERS IN ITS WAKE...





...AND THE GROUDWORK FOR UNKNOWN NUMBERS MORE TO COME.



It's All Relatives

Direct-to-Consumer DNA Testing May Mean the End of Family Secrets

By Kjerstin Johnson and Alexandra Beguez

I was 31 when my mom told me my parents had used a sperm donor to conceive me.

It came as a complete surprise.

Among my many questions:

Who am I?

Are you for real?

Do you know who the donor was?

WTF?!

What does Dad think?

Why didn't I know earlier?

No, there were no records back then. It could have been one of the med students for all I know.

The first thing I did when I got home was order a 23andMe kit, something I never would have considered before. I think it was a way for me to gain some degree of control over the situation.

Would you like to display your ancestry results and matching DNA segments to relatives?

YES

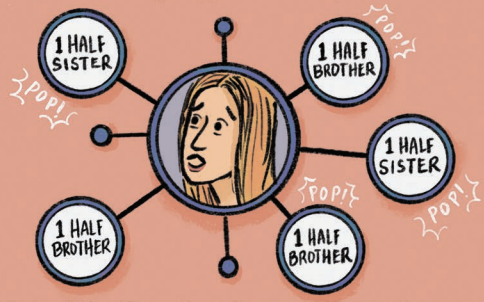
NO

I—an only child—was shocked when the results came back:

POP!

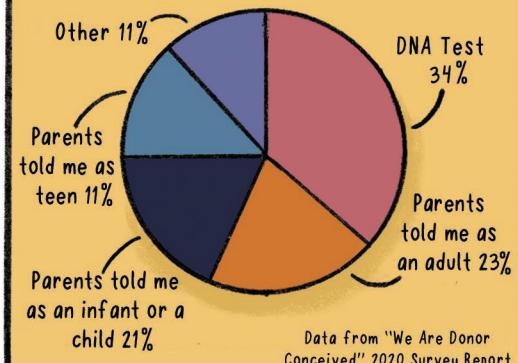
1 HALF BROTHER

Over the next year, four more half-siblings appeared in my results.



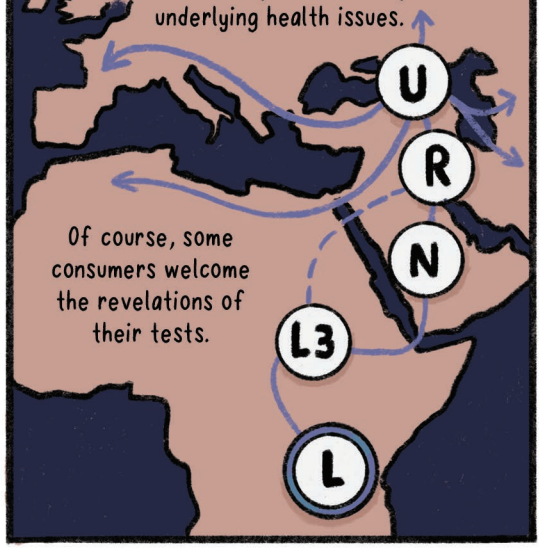
Out of the five of us, I assumed I was the only one who had just learned about my origin. Surely they had grown up with this knowledge, unlike me.

In fact, I learned I was the only one whose parent had told them. Everyone else was finding out from the DNA results.



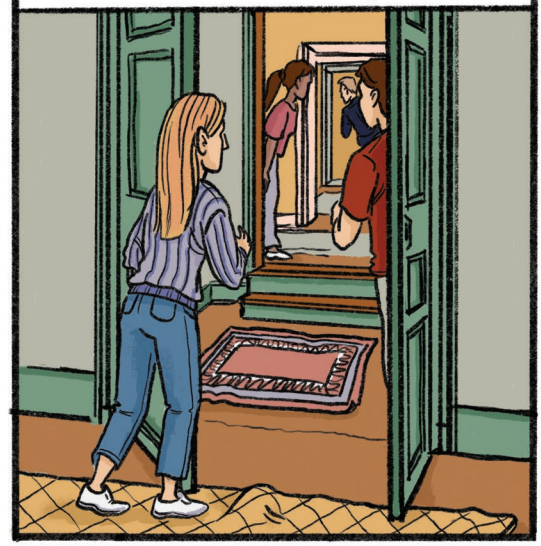
Data from "We Are Donor Conceived" 2020 Survey Report

At-home DNA kits, popularized by companies like 23andMe and Ancestry.com, have sold millions of kits since becoming popular in the 2010s, as consumers look to learn more about their heritage, ethnic origins, and underlying health issues.



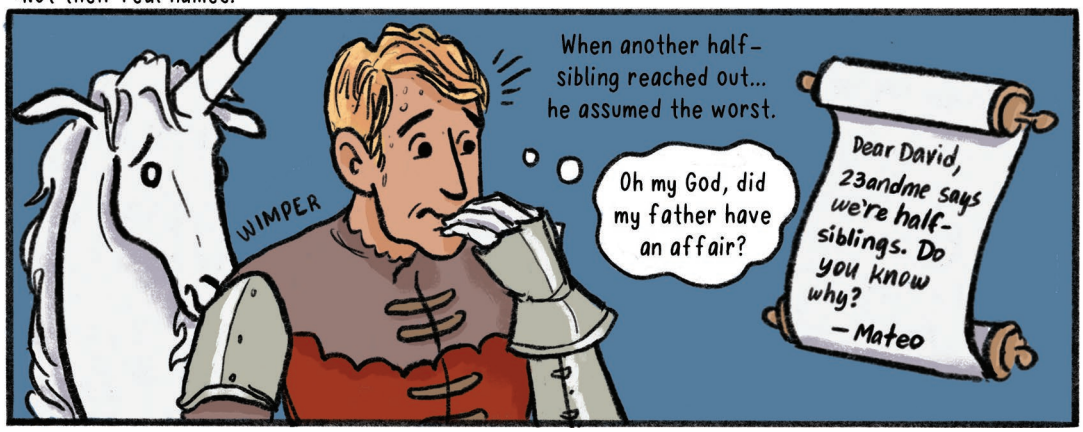
Of course, some consumers welcome the revelations of their tests.

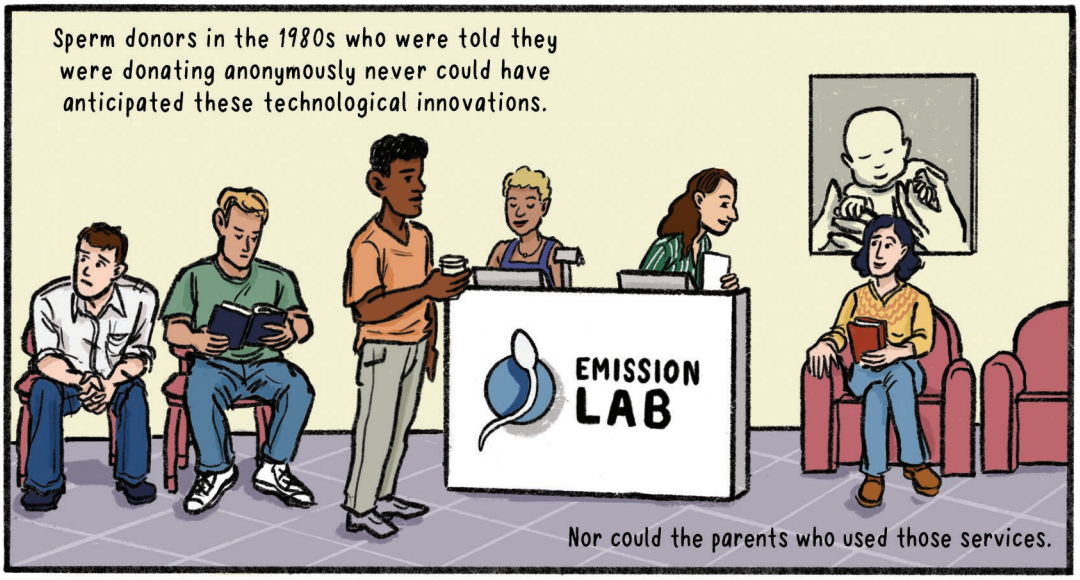
Adoptees learn more about their origins and can connect to new family members, and people whose ancestors experienced genocide or forced enslavement now have more tools to learn about their lineages.



But other times, people uncover more than they bargained for.

*Not their real names.





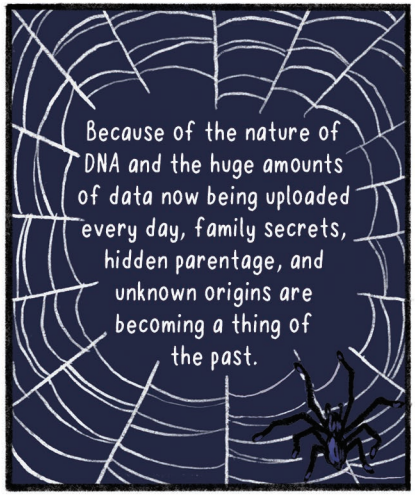
The internet is filled with stories of DNA discoveries.
Men find out they fathered a child they never knew about.
Mothers had affairs — or were raped — and kept it secret for decades.

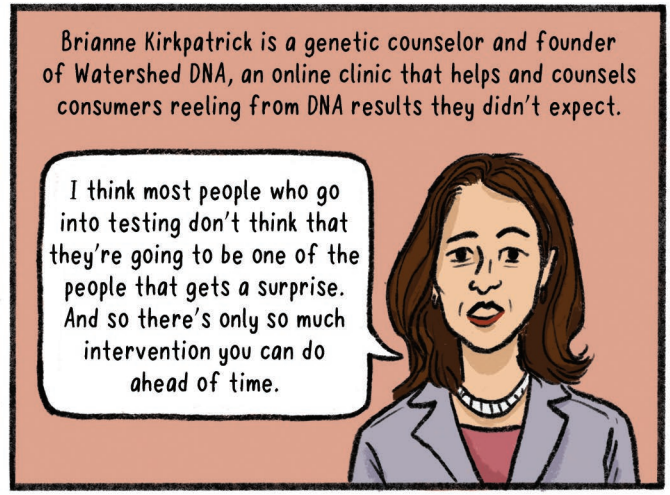
Learned his dad had a kid prior to marriage to his mom.

Found out her dad was her mother's prom date.

Discovered her birth mother... who doesn't want to meet her.

Found out he was not the biological father of the daughter he'd raised.





23andMe and Ancestry have statements on their sites acknowledging that the results could surprise you, as well as a checkbox you mark to share your results with other users.

23andMe SHOP LEARN

Risks and Considerations

There may be some consequences of using our Services that you haven't considered.

You may discover things about yourself and/or your family members that may be upsetting or cause anxiety and that you may not have the ability to control or change.

You may discover relatives who were previously unknown to you, or may learn that someone you thought you were related to is not your biological relative.

But why would you care if you are confident about your origins? Why not check the box when the whole point is to connect with your family?

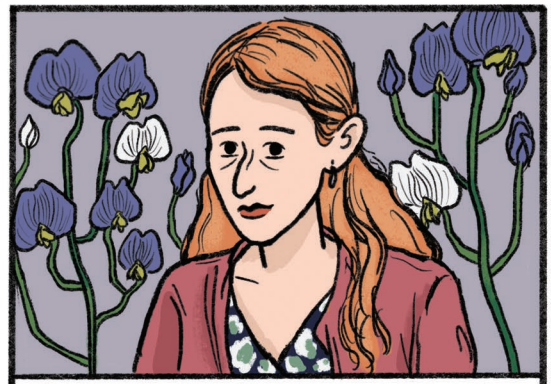
If 23andme and Ancestry were to create their commercials a little bit more like a drug/pharmaceutical advertisement, that would be more accurate to the experience of going through consumer DNA testing.

FAMILIA DNA®

Family is waiting for you.

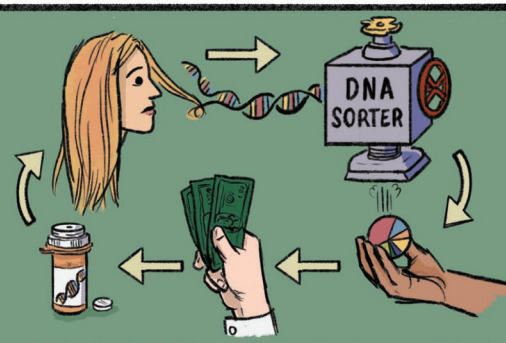
WARNING: Side effects may include: traumatic family secret revealed; questioning who you are; not trusting your closest family members; second-guessing what you think is true; realizing your loved ones have kept something from you for decades; feeling lied to; feeling alone.

I'm pretty sure I raced through the privacy prompts of 23andMe—and later Ancestry.com. I was learning things about myself I didn't know I didn't know.

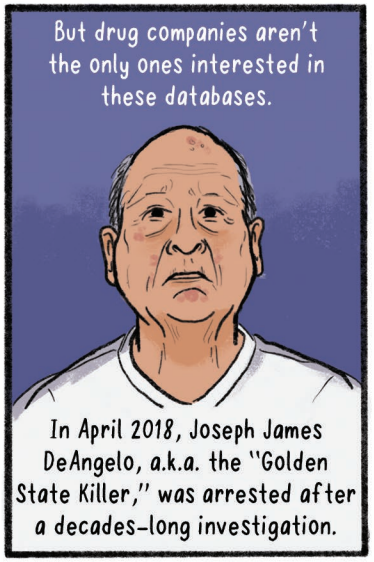


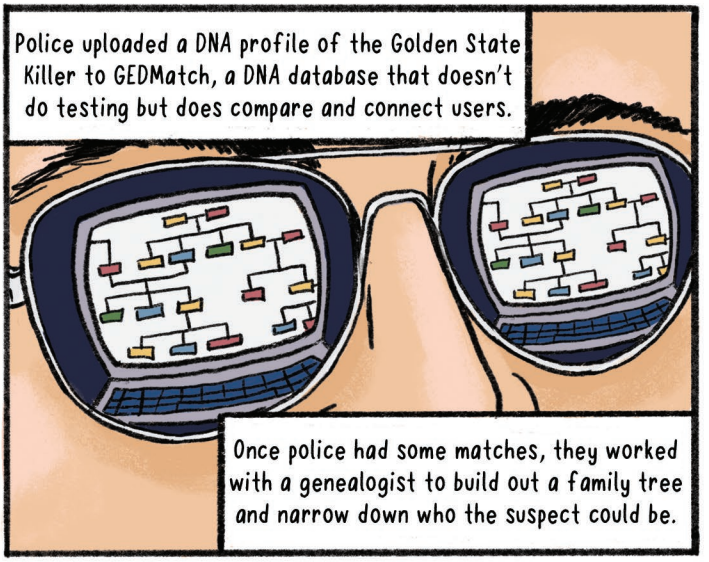
Natalie Ram, a professor and scholar on the intersection of genetic privacy and the law, has a more cynical take on the terms and conditions of these sites.

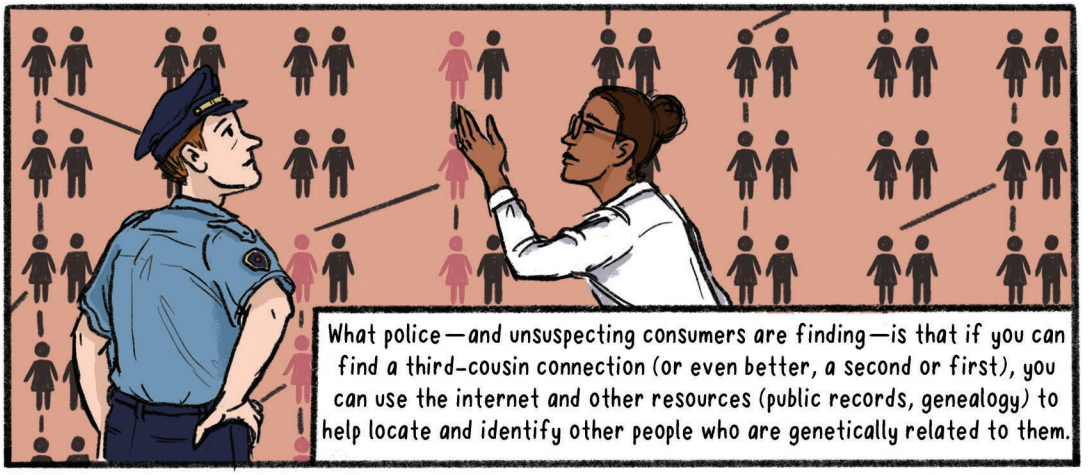
Privacy is not a new issue for these services. In 2018, it was announced that pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline was investing $300 million in 23andMe and would be using the data for scientific research—an outcome many critics had predicted of the consumer-facing DNA site.

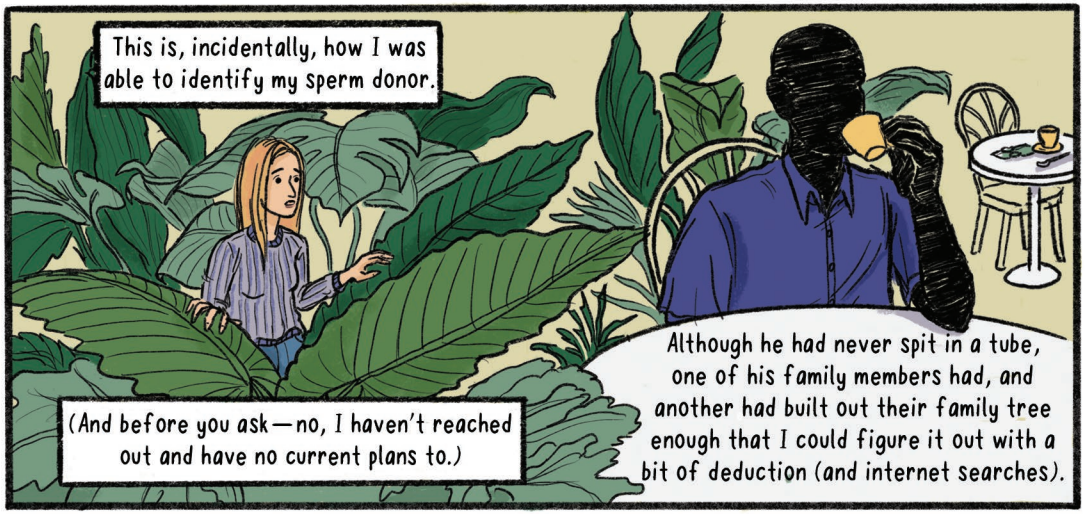


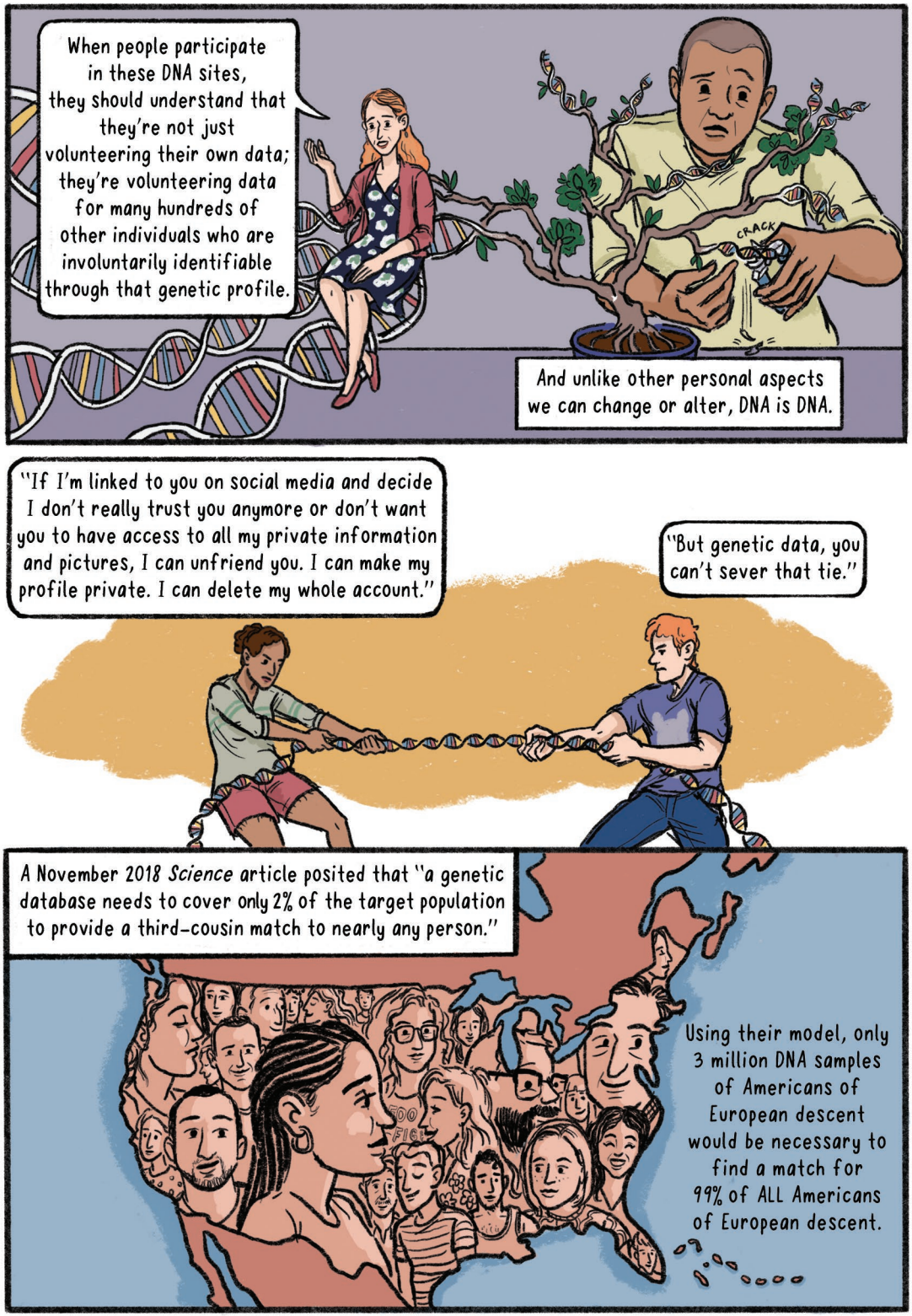
There's plenty to critique about a business model where people pay to submit their DNA to a private company, which then sells the data to drug companies, which in turn creates new drugs to sell back to consumers based on the medical conditions they find.

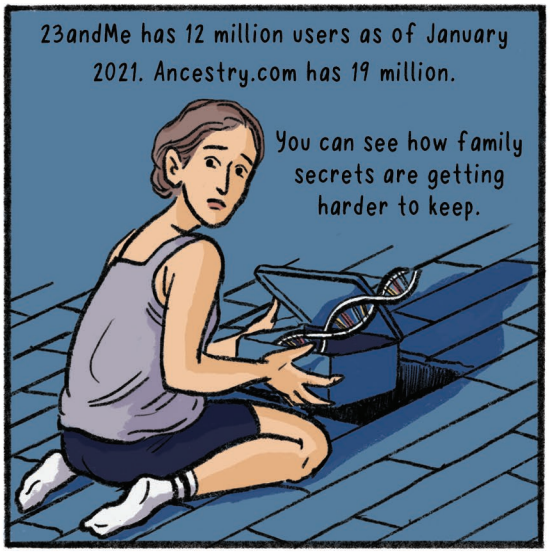

But drug companies aren't the only ones interested in these databases.
In April 2018, Joseph James DeAngelo, a.k.a. the "Golden State Killer," was arrested after a decades-long investigation.

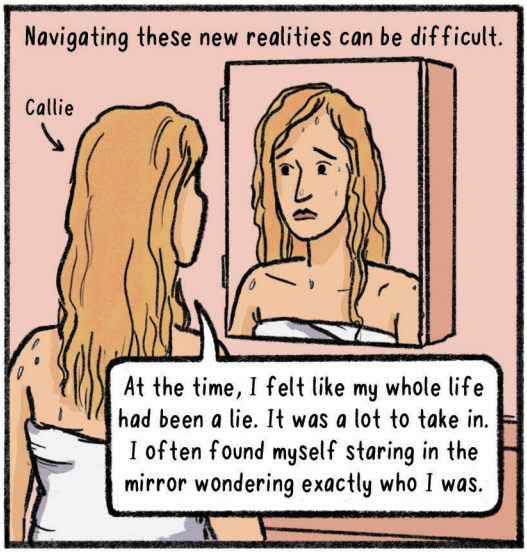

Police uploaded a DNA profile of the Golden State Killer to GEDMatch, a DNA database that doesn't do testing but does compare and connect users.
Once police had some matches, they worked with a genealogist to build out a family tree and narrow down who the suspect could be.


What police—and unsuspecting consumers are finding—is that if you can find a third-cousin connection (or even better, a second or first), you can use the internet and other resources (public records, genealogy) to help locate and identify other people who are genetically related to them.

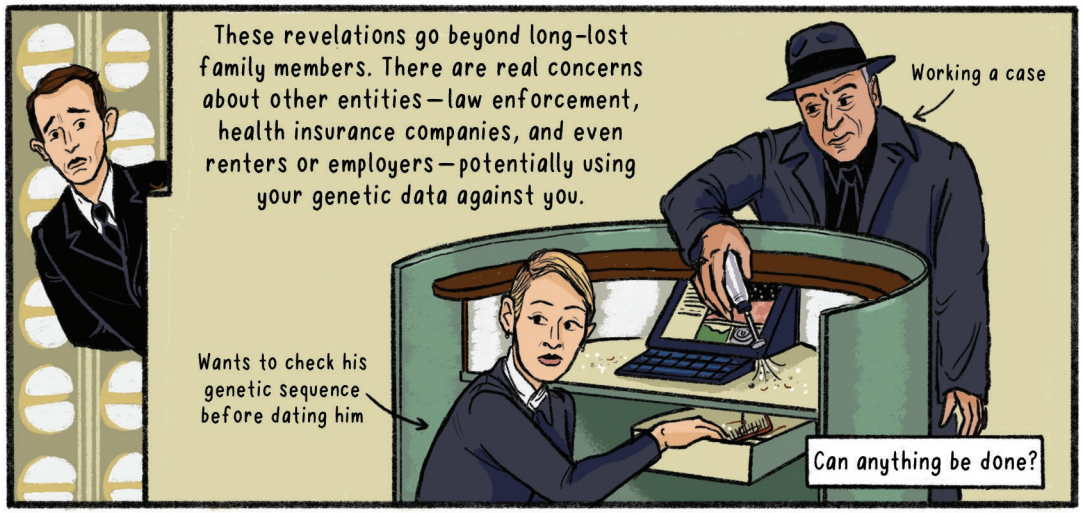

This is, incidentally, how I was able to identify my sperm donor.
(And before you ask—no, I haven't reached out and have no current plans to.)
Although he had never spit in a tube, one of his family members had, and another had built out their family tree enough that I could figure it out with a bit of deduction (and internet searches).


When people participate in these DNA sites, they should understand that they're not just volunteering their own data; they're volunteering data for many hundreds of other individuals who are involuntarily identifiable through that genetic profile.
CRACK
And unlike other personal aspects we can change or alter, DNA is DNA.
"If I'm linked to you on social media and decide I don't really trust you anymore or don't want you to have access to all my private information and pictures, I can unfriend you. I can make my profile private. I can delete my whole account."
"But genetic data, you can't sever that tie."
A November 2018 *Science* article posited that "a genetic database needs to cover only 2% of the target population to provide a third-cousin match to nearly any person."
Using their model, only 3 million DNA samples of Americans of European descent would be necessary to find a match for 99% of ALL Americans of European descent.


23andMe has 12 million users as of January 2021. Ancestry.com has 19 million.
You can see how family secrets are getting harder to keep.

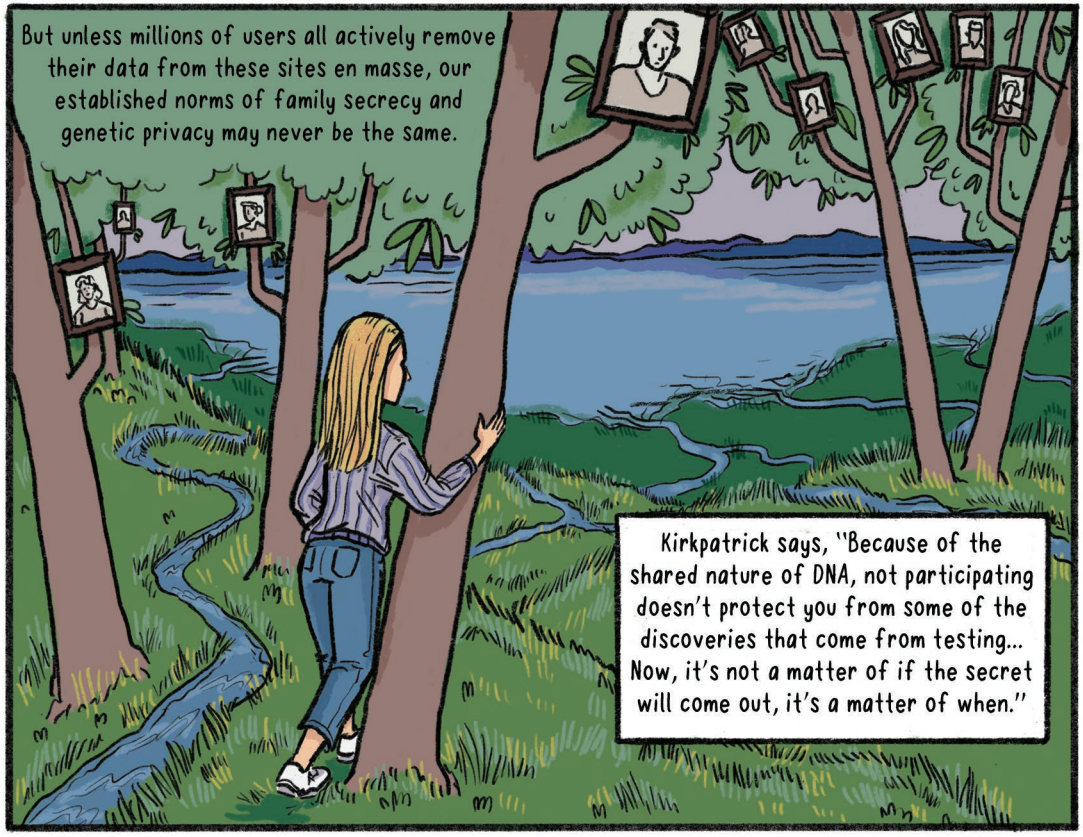

Navigating these new realities can be difficult.
Callie
At the time, I felt like my whole life had been a lie. It was a lot to take in. I often found myself staring in the mirror wondering exactly who I was.

Kirkpatrick believes there should be more education about support systems available to people who encounter these kinds of surprises, which can be confusing, painful, and traumatic.
"23andMe now has a page on their website that's dedicated to unexpected discoveries. But people don't know how to find that page. Ancestry has a similar page. It's also really hard to find."

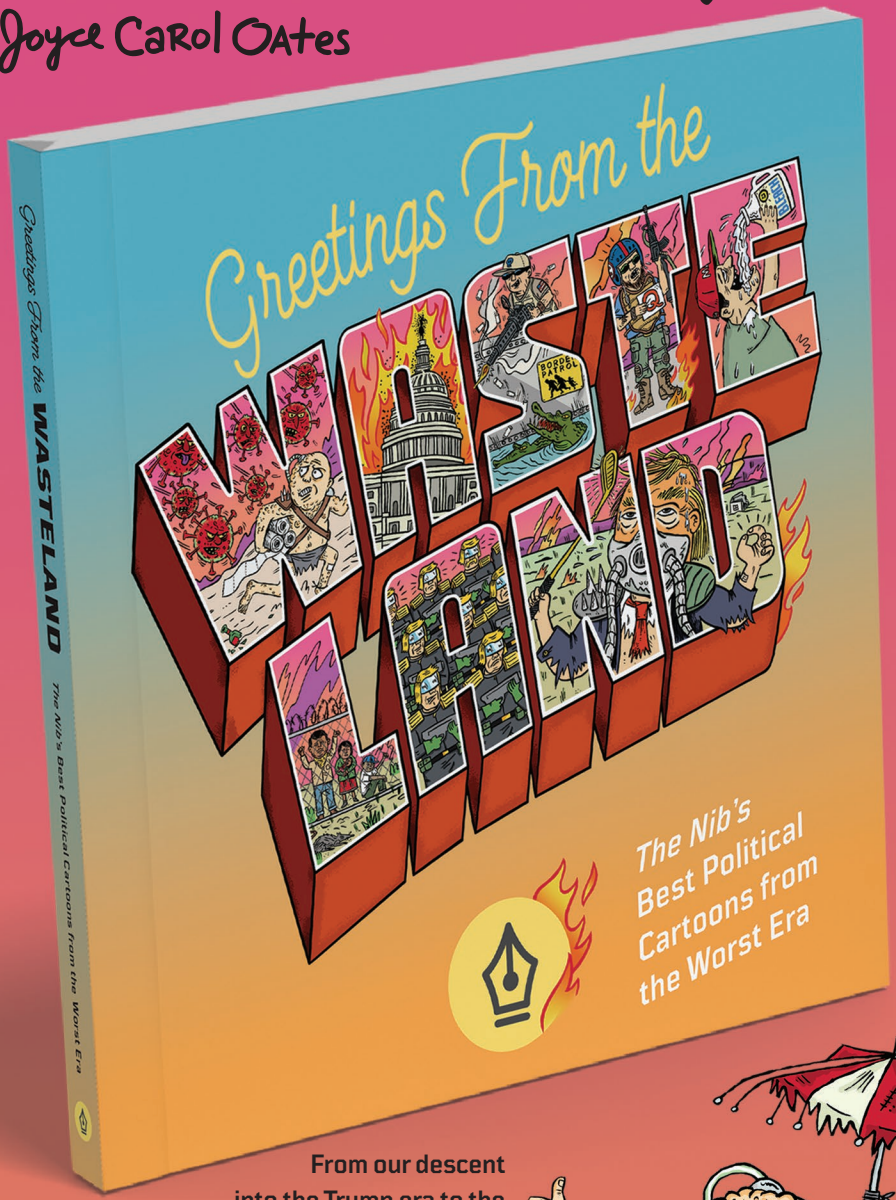

These revelations go beyond long-lost family members. There are real concerns about other entities—law enforcement, health insurance companies, and even renters or employers—potentially using your genetic data against you.
Working a case
Wants to check his genetic sequence before dating him
Can anything be done?

Some scientists have proposed attaching a "cryptographic signature" to DNA profiles, so that only you could upload your DNA. This could help stop cops from uploading someone else's DNA to a database.
ENCRYPTED
ENTER PASSWORD

Ram helped work on HB240 in the Maryland legislature, a first-of-its-kind bipartisan bill that limits how law enforcement can access consumer genetic sites.
HB240


But unless millions of users all actively remove their data from these sites en masse, our established norms of family secrecy and genetic privacy may never be the same.
Kirkpatrick says, "Because of the shared nature of DNA, not participating doesn't protect you from some of the discoveries that come from testing... Now, it's not a matter of if the secret will come out, it's a matter of when."

"Excellent Comics For a DeBased Age."
–Joyce Carol Oates



From our descent into the Trump era to the 2020 pandemic, we've collected 200 pages of our best political cartoons and satire on our dystopian hellscape. Featuring interviews and work from more than two dozen *Nib* cartoonists!

Order online at *thenib.com*/books.

the Secret of the Old Bookstore

Illustration by Mark Kaufman

As she slowly made her way through the old abandoned bookstore at the mall she whispered to herself, "*Why didn't I just log on to* The Nib *bookstore?*"

It's no secret. For our award-winning magazine and tons of books from your favorite comic artists, the only place in town is **thenib.com/books**.

THE NIB

TRICKSTER, TRAITOR,

DUMMY, DOLL

HOW THE CIA TRIED TO TRICK THE SOVIETS WITH SEX DOLLS (BUT ULTIMATELY GOT SCREWED)

BY TRIPLE DREAM COMICS

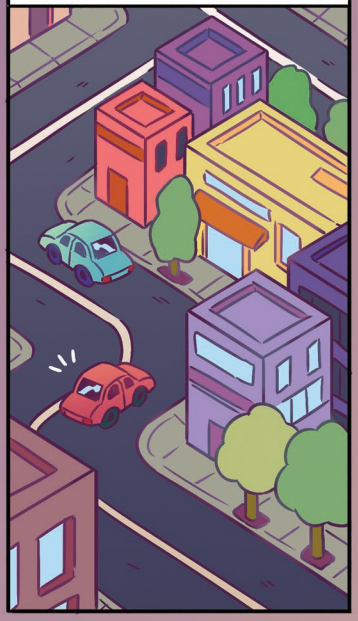
IN COLD WAR MOSCOW, AMERICAN SPIES WEREN'T JAMES BOND-STYLE SUPERHEROES. THEY WERE ORDINARY PEOPLE, OFTEN HUSBAND-WIFE TEAMS, WHO WORKED FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT (FREQUENTLY THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY) AND HAD RECEIVED SPECIAL TRAINING IN DRIVING, PHOTOGRAPHY, SKETCHING, AND OTHER FORMS OF SPYCRAFT.

SOME TECH WAS FANCY, LIKE A SMALL, EASILY CONCEALED CAMERA.

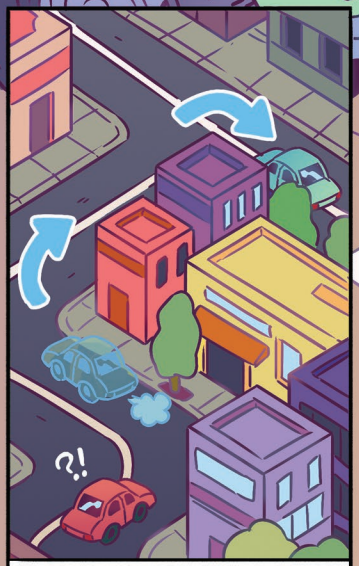
SOME TECH WAS PRACTICAL: SOVIET-MADE ZHIGULI. BOXY, PRACTICAL, AND VERY UNFLASHY.

BUT OCCASIONALLY, SOME SPY TECH WAS JUST A SEX DOLL IN A BOX IN THE BACK SEAT OF YOUR CAR.

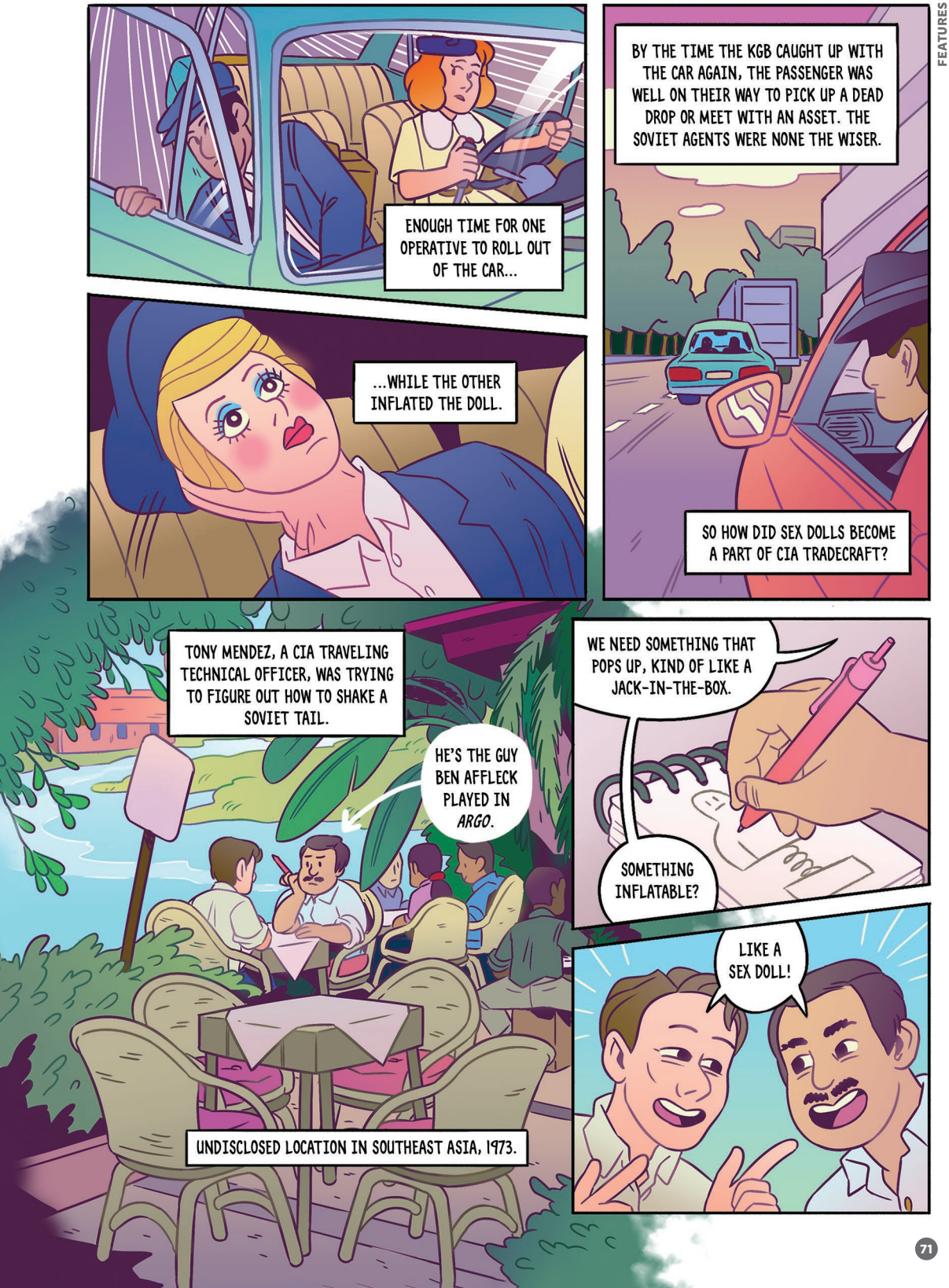
THESE TEAMS WERE FREQUENTLY TAILED BY MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET UNION'S SECURITY AGENCY: THE KGB.

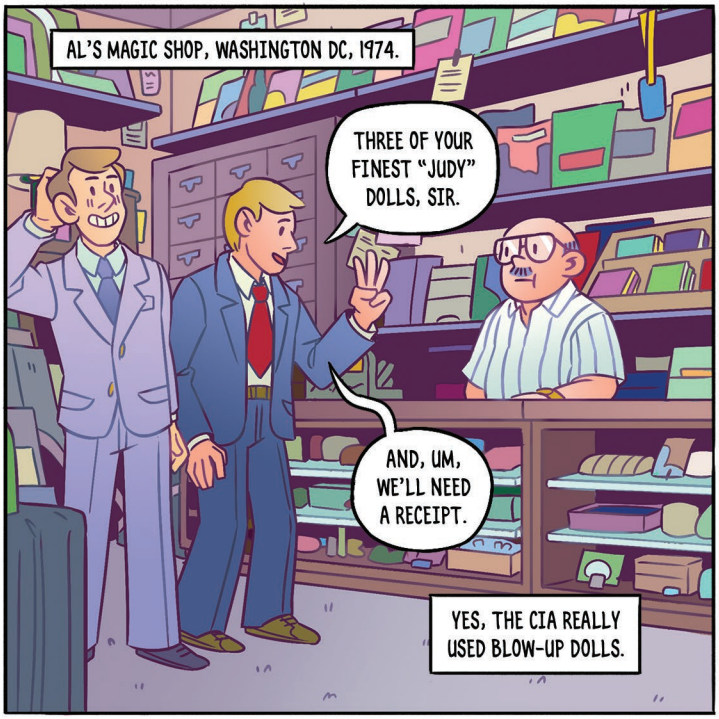


AMERICAN SPIES IN MOSCOW WERE ALWAYS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO "OPERATE BLACK"—WITHOUT SURVEILLANCE.

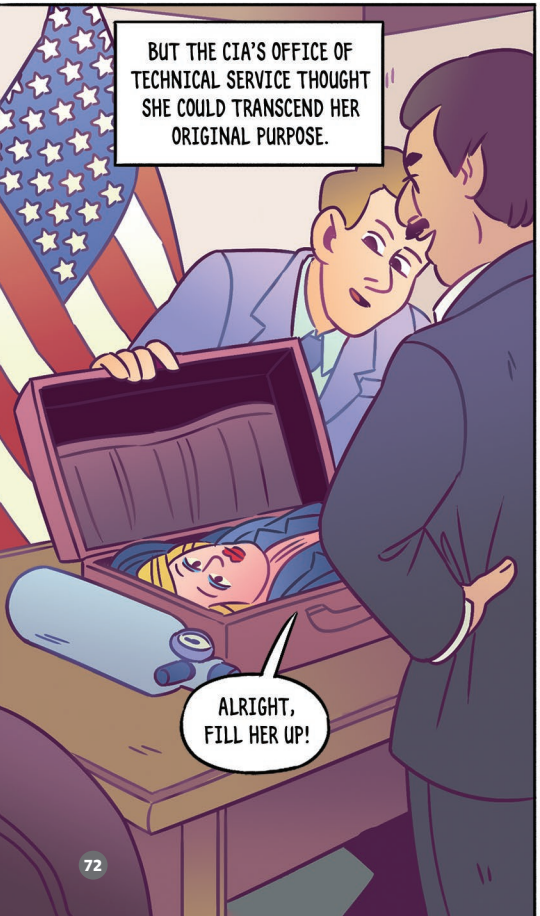


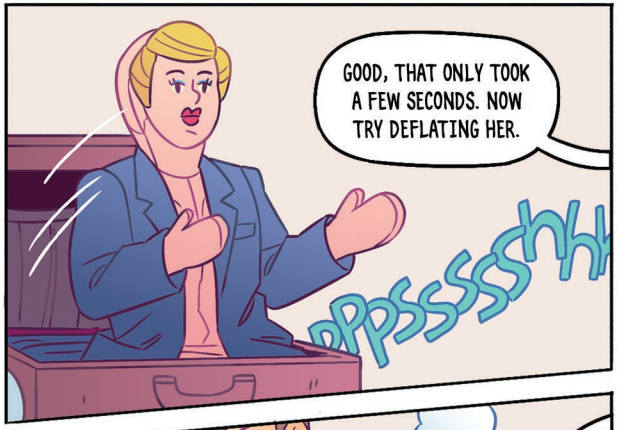
CIA OFFICERS DISCOVERED THAT IF THEY MADE TWO RIGHT TURNS IN QUICK SUCCESSION, THEY COULD EVADE THEIR KGB TAIL FOR A FEW—VALUABLE—SECONDS.

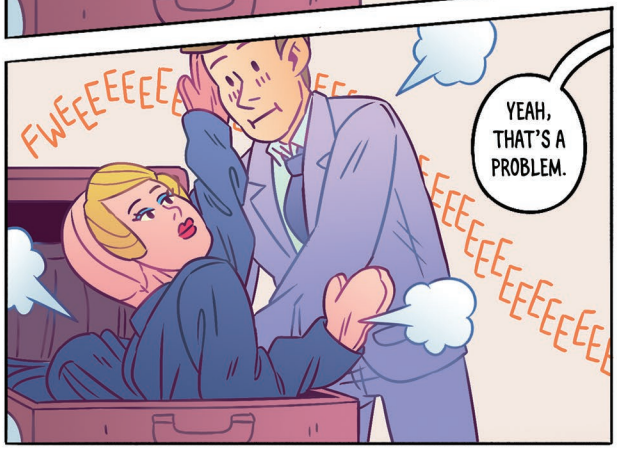

ENOUGH TIME FOR ONE OPERATIVE TO ROLL OUT OF THE CAR...
...WHILE THE OTHER INFLATED THE DOLL.
BY THE TIME THE KGB CAUGHT UP WITH THE CAR AGAIN, THE PASSENGER WAS WELL ON THEIR WAY TO PICK UP A DEAD DROP OR MEET WITH AN ASSET. THE SOVIET AGENTS WERE NONE THE WISER.
SO HOW DID SEX DOLLS BECOME A PART OF CIA TRADECRAFT?
TONY MENDEZ, A CIA TRAVELING TECHNICAL OFFICER, WAS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO SHAKE A SOVIET TAIL.
HE'S THE GUY BEN AFFLECK PLAYED IN *ARGO*.
UNDISCLOSED LOCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1973.
WE NEED SOMETHING THAT POPS UP, KIND OF LIKE A JACK-IN-THE-BOX.
SOMETHING INFLATABLE?
LIKE A SEX DOLL!



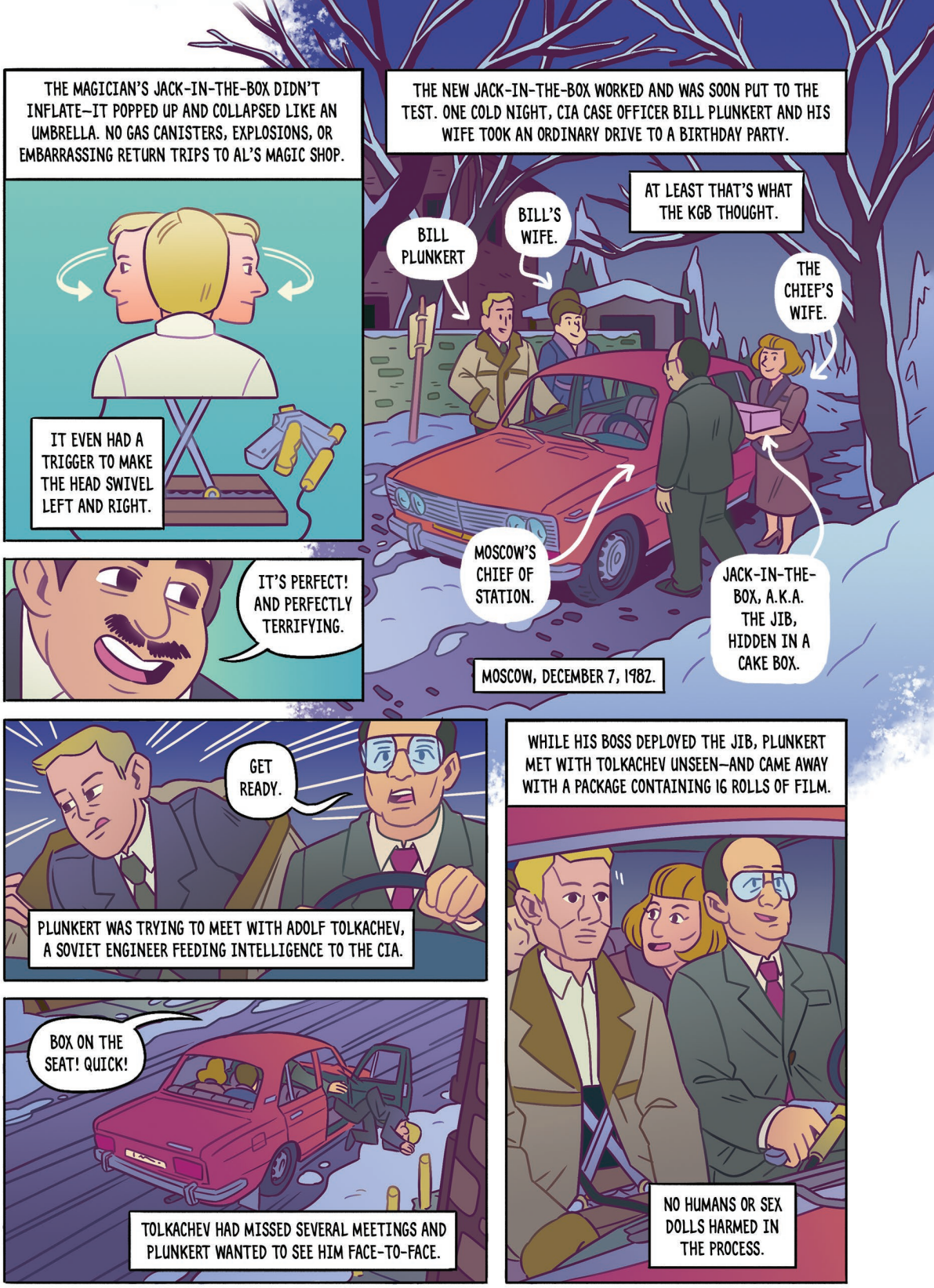
JUDY WAS A LIFE-SIZED INFLATABLE DOLL MADE FROM CHEAP PLASTIC. SHE WAS DESIGNED TO BE A GAG GIFT AT BACHELOR PARTIES, NOT AN ACCOMPLICE ON SPY MISSIONS.



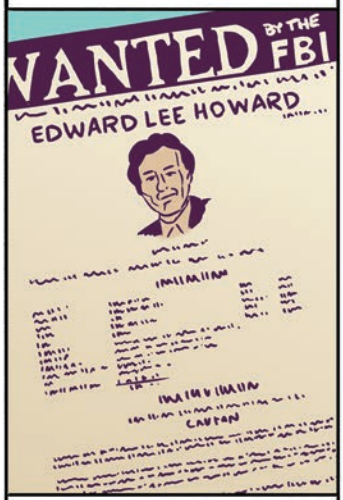




EVENTUALLY, JUDY WAS RETIRED FROM THE JACK-IN-THE-BOX EXPERIMENTS AND THE CIA SOUGHT THE HELP OF A MAGICIAN CONSULTANT KNOWN AS "JOSH."


THE MAGICIAN'S JACK-IN-THE-BOX DIDN'T INFLATE—IT POPPED UP AND COLLAPSED LIKE AN UMBRELLA. NO GAS CANISTERS, EXPLOSIONS, OR EMBARRASSING RETURN TRIPS TO AL'S MAGIC SHOP.
IT EVEN HAD A TRIGGER TO MAKE THE HEAD SWIVEL LEFT AND RIGHT.
IT'S PERFECT! AND PERFECTLY TERRIFYING.
THE NEW JACK-IN-THE-BOX WORKED AND WAS SOON PUT TO THE TEST. ONE COLD NIGHT, CIA CASE OFFICER BILL PLUNKERT AND HIS WIFE TOOK AN ORDINARY DRIVE TO A BIRTHDAY PARTY.
AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE KGB THOUGHT.
BILL PLUNKERT
BILL'S WIFE.
THE CHIEF'S WIFE.
MOSCOW'S CHIEF OF STATION.
JACK-IN-THE-BOX, A.K.A. THE JIB, HIDDEN IN A CAKE BOX.
MOSCOW, DECEMBER 7, 1982.
GET READY.
PLUNKERT WAS TRYING TO MEET WITH ADOLF TOLKACHEV, A SOVIET ENGINEER FEEDING INTELLIGENCE TO THE CIA.
BOX ON THE SEAT! QUICK!
TOLKACHEV HAD MISSED SEVERAL MEETINGS AND PLUNKERT WANTED TO SEE HIM FACE-TO-FACE.
WHILE HIS BOSS DEPLOYED THE JIB, PLUNKERT MET WITH TOLKACHEV UNSEEN—AND CAME AWAY WITH A PACKAGE CONTAINING 16 ROLLS OF FILM.
NO HUMANS OR SEX DOLLS HARMED IN THE PROCESS.

AROUND THE SAME TIME, THE CIA WAS TRAINING A NEW CASE OFFICER FOR MOSCOW



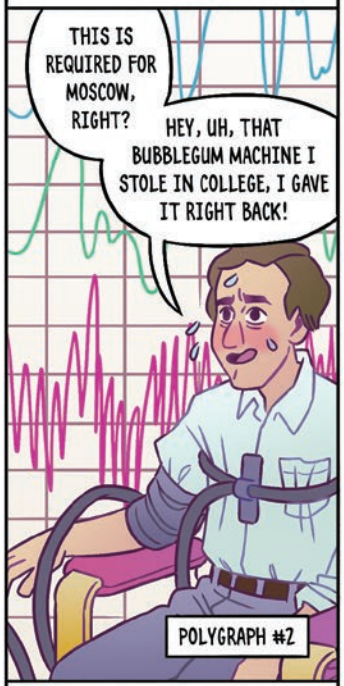
EDWARD LEE HOWARD NEVER EXPECTED TO BE JAMES BOND.

HIS DREAM CIA POSTING WAS BERNE, SWITZERLAND, WHERE HE IMAGINED HIMSELF SPYING ON BANKERS.

*SOVIET EASTERN-EUROPEAN

BOTH HE AND HIS WIFE MARY WERE TRAINED IN SPYCRAFT AT THE CIA'S CAMP PEARY.

UNFORTUNATELY, LIKE JAMES BOND, HOWARD WAS NO STRANGER TO A MARTINI.



POLYGRAPH #2

HOWARD FIGURED THIS ASSIGNMENT WOULD BE GOOD FOR HIS CAREER...

POLYGRAPH #3

...HOWEVER, AFTER FOUR CONSECUTIVE FAULTY POLYGRAPH TESTS...

...HOWARD'S CIA CAREER POPPED LIKE AN OVERINFLATED JUDY DOLL.

DAVID FORDEN, CHIEF OF THE CIA'S SE DIVISION.

PEOPLE BETRAY THEIR ORGANIZATION OR COUNTRY FOR MANY REASONS. THE FOUR MOST COMMON ARE KNOWN BY ***MICE***.

M IS FOR MONEY. CASH THAT THE RIVAL GROUP IS OFFERING.

I IS FOR IDEOLOGY. IF YOU DISAGREED WITH THE SOVIETS, YOU MIGHT SPY FOR THE USA. OR VICE VERSA.

C IS FOR COERCION OR COMPROMISE. SOMEONE HAS DIRT ON YOU, AND THEY THREATEN TO RELEASE IT IF YOU DON'T SPY FOR THEM.

E IS FOR EGO. YOU WANT REVENGE BECAUSE YOU WERE PASSED OVER FOR A PROMOTION...

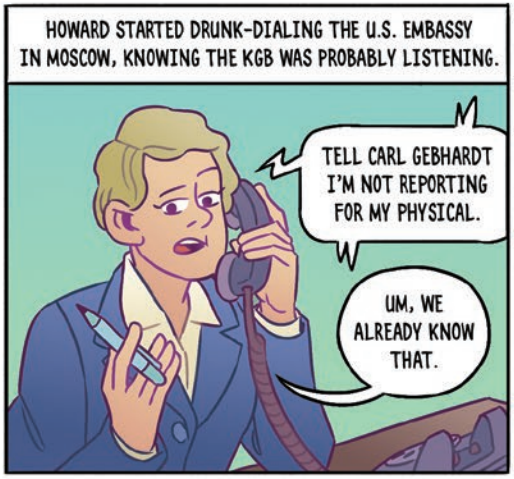
... OR MAYBE FIRED OVER SOMETHING AS UNRELIABLE AS A POLYGRAPH.

YOU WOULD THINK THAT THE CIA MIGHT INFORM THE FBI—THE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDLING DOMESTIC SECURITY THREATS—THAT THEY'D RECENTLY FIRED SOMEONE WITH LOADS OF SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE.

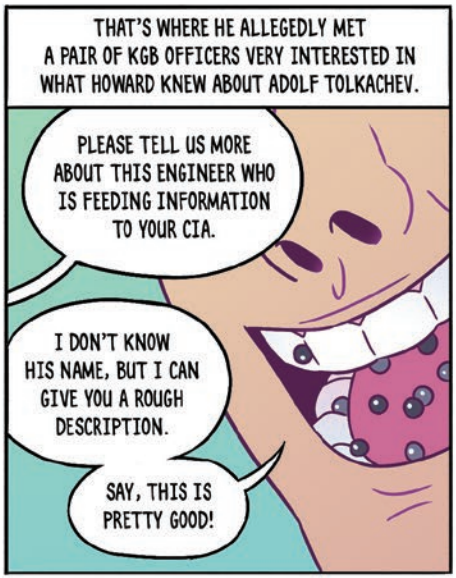
I'M GOING TO GET THOSE BASTARDS! I'M GONNA HURT THEM LIKE THEY'VE NEVER BEEN HURT BEFORE.

THE CIA F****ED ME!

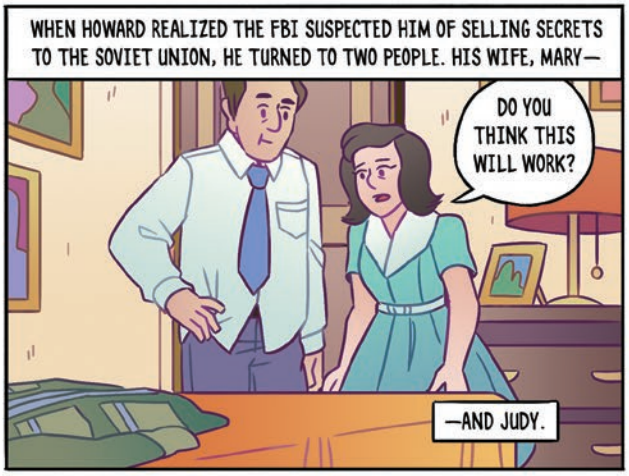
THEY DIDN'T. NOT EVEN AFTER EDWARD HOWARD SHOWED UP DRUNK AND SCREAMING AT A CIA BRANCH CHIEF'S HOME.


HOWARD STARTED DRUNK-DIALING THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MOSCOW, KNOWING THE KGB WAS PROBABLY LISTENING.
TELL CARL GEBHARDT I'M NOT REPORTING FOR MY PHYSICAL.
UM, WE ALREADY KNOW THAT.

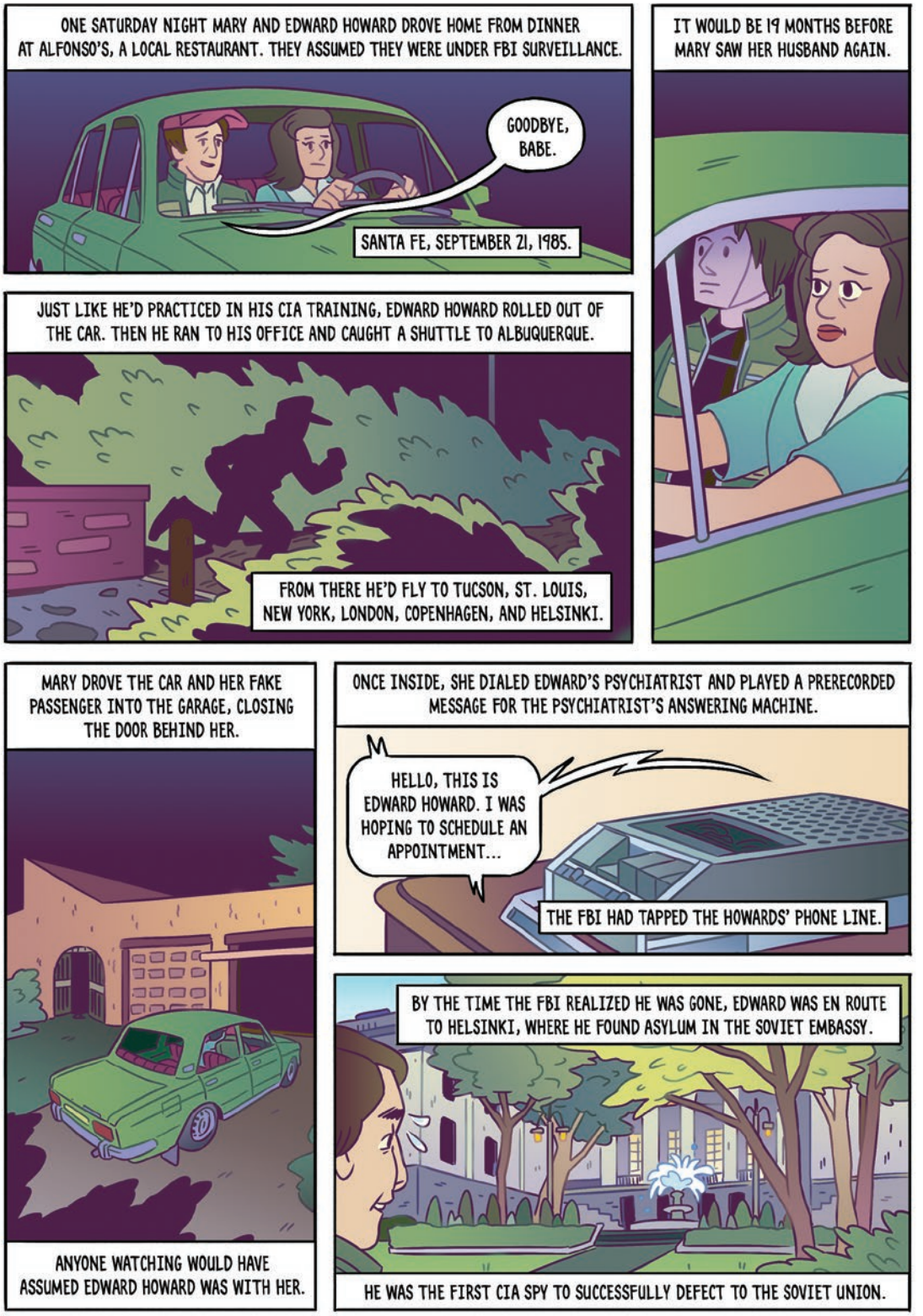
ИКРА БЕЛУГИ? IKRA BELUGI?*
*BELUGA CAVIAR?
THE CIA ACCIDENTALLY MAILED HIS FAMILY DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS. HE STARTED TAKING MYSTERIOUS TRIPS TO AUSTRIA.

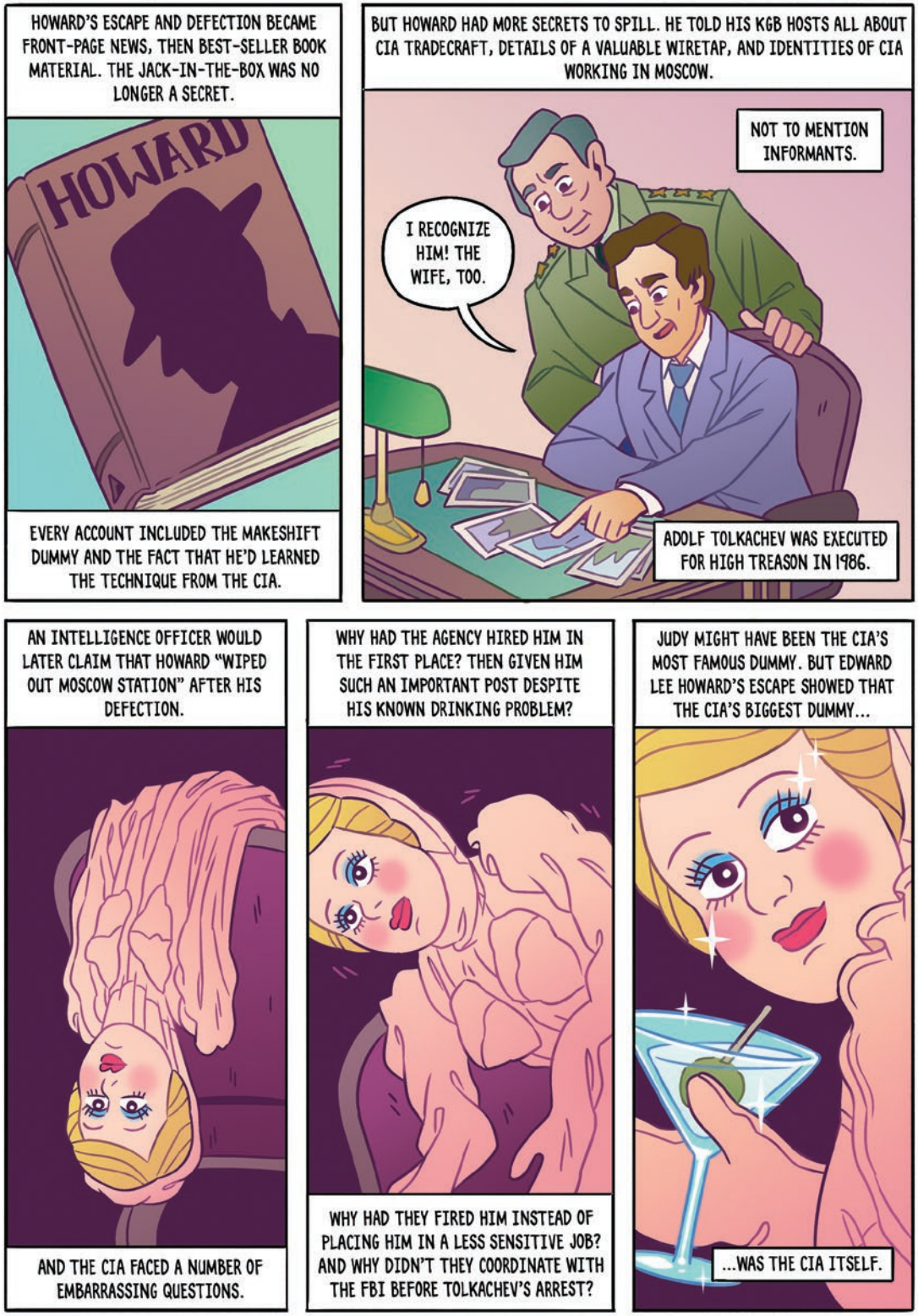

THAT'S WHERE HE ALLEGEDLY MET A PAIR OF KGB OFFICERS VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT HOWARD KNEW ABOUT ADOLF TOLKACHEV.
PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS ENGINEER WHO IS FEEDING INFORMATION TO YOUR CIA.
I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME, BUT I CAN GIVE YOU A ROUGH DESCRIPTION.
SAY, THIS IS PRETTY GOOD!

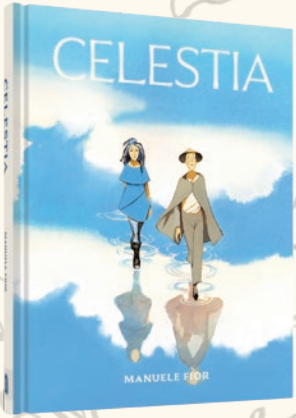
THE CIA FINALLY ALERTED THE FBI TO HOWARD'S EXISTENCE, WELL AFTER THE KGB USED HIM TO FIGURE OUT THAT TOLKACHEV WAS A SPY.
EDWARD LEE HOWARD? WE NEED TO TALK TO YOU.

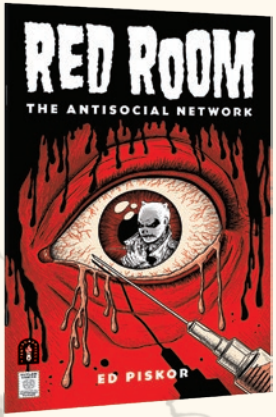

WHEN HOWARD REALIZED THE FBI SUSPECTED HIM OF SELLING SECRETS TO THE SOVIET UNION, HE TURNED TO TWO PEOPLE. HIS WIFE, MARY—
DO YOU THINK THIS WILL WORK?
—AND JUDY.

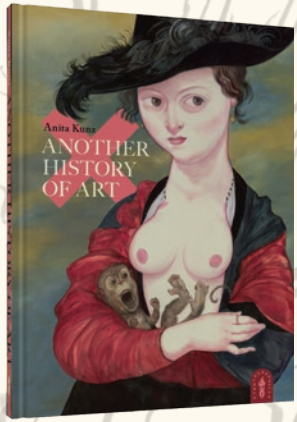
WELL, HIS OWN MAKESHIFT VERSION OF JUDY.
IT'LL HAVE TO.

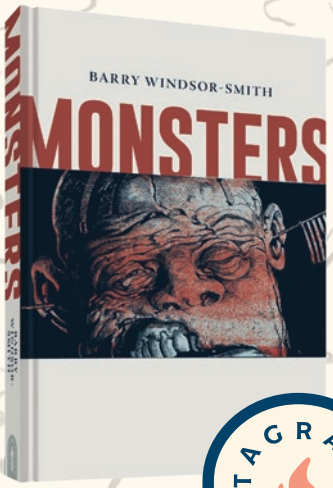

ONE SATURDAY NIGHT MARY AND EDWARD HOWARD DROVE HOME FROM DINNER AT ALFONSO'S, A LOCAL RESTAURANT. THEY ASSUMED THEY WERE UNDER FBI SURVEILLANCE.
GOODBYE, BABE.
SANTA FE, SEPTEMBER 21, 1985.
IT WOULD BE 19 MONTHS BEFORE MARY SAW HER HUSBAND AGAIN.
JUST LIKE HE'D PRACTICED IN HIS CIA TRAINING, EDWARD HOWARD ROLLED OUT OF THE CAR. THEN HE RAN TO HIS OFFICE AND CAUGHT A SHUTTLE TO ALBUQUERQUE.
FROM THERE HE'D FLY TO TUCSON, ST. LOUIS, NEW YORK, LONDON, COPENHAGEN, AND HELSINKI.
MARY DROVE THE CAR AND HER FAKE PASSENGER INTO THE GARAGE, CLOSING THE DOOR BEHIND HER.
ANYONE WATCHING WOULD HAVE ASSUMED EDWARD HOWARD WAS WITH HER.
ONCE INSIDE, SHE DIALED EDWARD'S PSYCHIATRIST AND PLAYED A PRERECORDED MESSAGE FOR THE PSYCHIATRIST'S ANSWERING MACHINE.
HELLO, THIS IS EDWARD HOWARD. I WAS HOPING TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT...
THE FBI HAD TAPPED THE HOWARDS' PHONE LINE.
BY THE TIME THE FBI REALIZED HE WAS GONE, EDWARD WAS EN ROUTE TO HELSINKI, WHERE HE FOUND ASYLUM IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY.
HE WAS THE FIRST CIA SPY TO SUCCESSFULLY DEFECT TO THE SOVIET UNION.


HOWARD'S ESCAPE AND DEFECTION BECAME FRONT-PAGE NEWS, THEN BEST-SELLER BOOK MATERIAL. THE JACK-IN-THE-BOX WAS NO LONGER A SECRET.
HOWARD
EVERY ACCOUNT INCLUDED THE MAKESHIFT DUMMY AND THE FACT THAT HE'D LEARNED THE TECHNIQUE FROM THE CIA.
BUT HOWARD HAD MORE SECRETS TO SPILL. HE TOLD HIS KGB HOSTS ALL ABOUT CIA TRADECRAFT, DETAILS OF A VALUABLE WIRETAP, AND IDENTITIES OF CIA WORKING IN MOSCOW.
NOT TO MENTION INFORMANTS.
I RECOGNIZE HIM! THE WIFE, TOO.
ADOLF TOLKACHEV WAS EXECUTED FOR HIGH TREASON IN 1986.
AN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WOULD LATER CLAIM THAT HOWARD "WIPED OUT MOSCOW STATION" AFTER HIS DEFECTION.
AND THE CIA FACED A NUMBER OF EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS.
WHY HAD THE AGENCY HIRED HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE? THEN GIVEN HIM SUCH AN IMPORTANT POST DESPITE HIS KNOWN DRINKING PROBLEM?
WHY HAD THEY FIRED HIM INSTEAD OF PLACING HIM IN A LESS SENSITIVE JOB? AND WHY DIDN'T THEY COORDINATE WITH THE FBI BEFORE TOLKACHEV'S ARREST?
JUDY MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE CIA'S MOST FAMOUS DUMMY. BUT EDWARD LEE HOWARD'S ESCAPE SHOWED THAT THE CIA'S BIGGEST DUMMY...
...WAS THE CIA ITSELF.









NEW COMIC ART TO STIMULATE YOUR SUMMER

FANTAGRAPHICS
PUBLISHER OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST CARTOONISTS

COVERING UP HATE

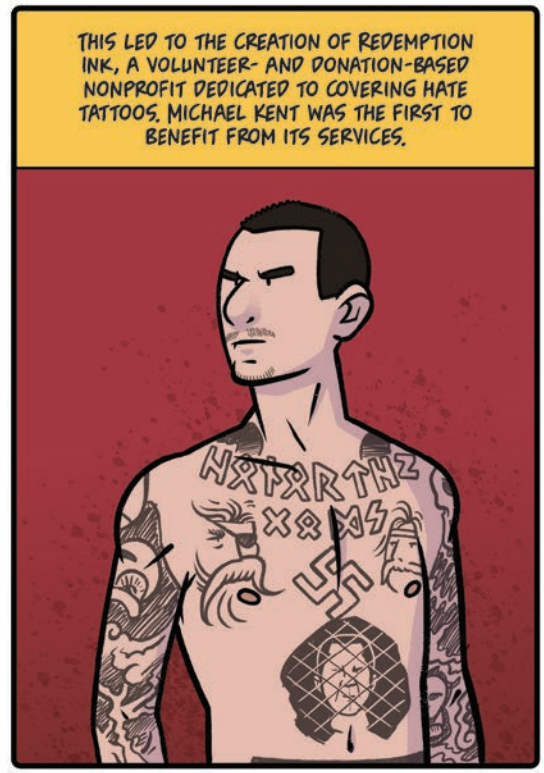
BY ALLY SHWED
AND GERARDO ALBA

TATTOOS HAVE EXISTED SINCE THE NEOLITHIC ERA. INEVITABLY, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME TO REGRET THEIR INK.
ENTER THE COVER-UP, A NEW PIECE OF ART TATTOOED OVER A PREVIOUS DESIGN. PERFECT FOR MOVING PAST A BREAKUP...
...OR HIDING YOUR PAST SELF.
SOME TATTOOS ARE THE RESULT OF BEING YOUNG AND IMPRESSIONABLE.
THIS IS WHAT WE BELIEVE IN. SHOW YOUR PRIDE.
NOTHING BUT HATE
OTHERS ARE DECISIONS MADE IN THE MOMENT.
YOUR LOYALTY WILL PROTECT YOU.
BTRRR-BTRRRRR
TATTOOS ARE PERMANENT, BUT PEOPLE CAN CHANGE. WHAT THEN?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS WEAR SWEATSHIRTS, DADDY?
A COVER-UP SEEMS LIKE AN OBVIOUS SOLUTION, BUT TATTOOS CAN TAKE HOURS AND COST HUNDREDS. LASER REMOVAL IS EVEN MORE EXPENSIVE AND PAINFUL.

A FEW TATTOO ARTISTS CAME TO RECOGNIZE THIS PROBLEM AND BEGAN OFFERING THEIR SERVICES PRO BONO.
TATTOO
If you have a racist tattoo and you want it gone, I'll cover it for free.
No questions asked.
I choose the design.
Let's get that shit off your body.

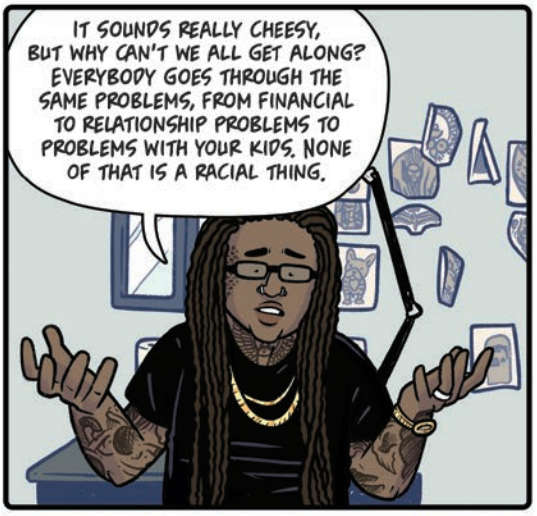
DAVID "DB" BROWN IS ONE SUCH ARTIST. HE'S BEEN TATTOOING FOR ABOUT 16 YEARS. IN 2017, HE WAS INSPIRED BY A PARTICULAR CLIENT WHOM A FELLOW ARTIST HAD ENCOUNTERED.
THE GUY COULDN'T GET A JOB, COULDN'T GET THIS, COULDN'T DO THAT, BECAUSE OF THE TATTOOS HE WORE. AND HE DIDN'T NECESSARILY WEAR THE TATTOOS TO BE HATEFUL.

THESE GUYS GO TO JAIL... AND IT'S THAT VERY BASE MENTALITY THAT IF YOU DON'T BELONG TO A GROUP, THEN YOU'RE WEAK AND, YOU KNOW, NOT GOING TO LAST LONG. SO THESE GUYS FIT IN, AND TYPICALLY WHERE THEY FIT IN HAPPENS TO BE BASED ON SKIN TONE. AS TRAGIC AS THAT IS.


THIS LED TO THE CREATION OF REDEMPTION INK, A VOLUNTEER- AND DONATION-BASED NONPROFIT DEDICATED TO COVERING HATE TATTOOS. MICHAEL KENT WAS THE FIRST TO BENEFIT FROM ITS SERVICES.

KENT WAS PART OF A VIOLENT SKINHEAD GROUP.
THIS PRISON TATTOO WAS HIS FIRST PIECE OF RACIST INK.
WHITE PRIDE
WHEN KENT GOT OUT OF PRISON, HE WAS ASSIGNED TIFFANY WHITTIER AS A PROBATION OFFICER.
PROBATION
THROUGHOUT HIS PAROLE, THE TWO FORMED AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP. WHITTIER CONVINCED KENT TO TURN HIS LIFE AROUND.
WHITTIER WAS THERE TO SEE HIS "WHITE PRIDE" DISAPPEAR.
THE COVER-UPS WERE KENT'S FIRST TIME INSIDE A PROFESSIONAL TATTOO STUDIO.
BZZZZT-BZZT
BZZZ
BUT THE ORIGINAL TATTOO NEVER REALLY DISAPPEARS. AS DB EXPLAINS, IT SITS FOREVER IN THE THIRD DERMAL LAYER OF THE SKIN.
IF YOU THINK OF A BIG, BLACK SWASTIKA, IT'S NOT THE EASIEST THING TO COVER. SO YOU'VE GOT TO GET SOME REALLY DISTRACTING LINES TO GO INTO THAT.
BUT WHAT PEOPLE SEE IS WHAT MATTERS TO THESE GUYS.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SEE THE OLD TATTOO. THE OLD LIFE IS GONE.

ESMAILIN SANCHEZ, WHO GOES BY MALIBOO SMILEY, IS ANOTHER ARTIST OFFERING FREE COVER-UPS. HE'S BEEN TATTOOING FOR 13 YEARS.
JOINING THE TATTOO INDUSTRY ALLOWED ME TO WORK WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND LEARN SO MUCH THAT AT THE END OF THE DAY, ALL I SEE IS HUMANS, NOT COLOR.
WHEN HIS STUDIO FIRST OPENED THREE YEARS AGO, SMILEY HIRED A HANDYMAN. AT THE END OF THE JOB, THE MAN'S WIFE CAME INTO THE SHOP WITH HIM.
I HATE THIS. WHAT CAN YOU DO?
YOU KNOW WHAT? SINCE YOU WORKED WITH ME, I'LL HOOK YOU UP. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
THE TWO MEN BECAME FRIENDS.
THEN WHEN THE GEORGE FLOYD THING HAPPENED, I'M LIKE, HOW CAN I HELP, AS A BUSINESS OWNER, AS A MINORITY?
LET ME SEE IF I COULD HELP OUT BY DOING THE FREE TATTOOS.
THIS DECISION WAS COMPLICATED, AS A MAJORITY OF SMILEY'S REGULAR CLIENTS ARE POLICE OFFICERS.
I GET TO SEE BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE. AND HOW DO I CHOOSE A SIDE? WELL, I CAN'T, BECAUSE I'M SEEING BOTH.
BZZZT
BZZZZT
SMILEY'S CLIENTS TRAVEL FROM AS FAR AS CALIFORNIA TO COVER UP THEIR HATEFUL INK. THE DEMAND WAS SO HIGH, HE WAS DOING ONE FREE COVER-UP A DAY THE FIRST YEAR HE OFFERED THIS SERVICE.
IT'S NOT JUST WHITE CLIENTS. THERE WERE ASIAN CLIENTS, BLACK CLIENTS, HISPANIC CLIENTS—THEY ALL HAVE RACIST TATTOOS.



FOR MANY ARTISTS AND CLIENTS, IT'S MORE THAN JUST COVERING UP AN OLD TATTOO.

I'M TRYING TO GIVE PEOPLE A SECOND CHANCE, BECAUSE YOU KNOW HOW MANY CHANCES I WAS GIVEN?

PEOPLE DO CHANGE... THERE'S ALWAYS TIME FOR A SECOND CHANCE AT A FIRST IMPRESSION.

Asia Bey

Slow Release

When I was young I was sexually abused.
It took me years to learn how to move through it.

Eleven years ago, at the porous and independence-seeking age of fourteen, I started my first romantic sexual relationship.

I felt vulnerable and inexperienced. Out of my depth.

His interests and requests felt years out of my range.

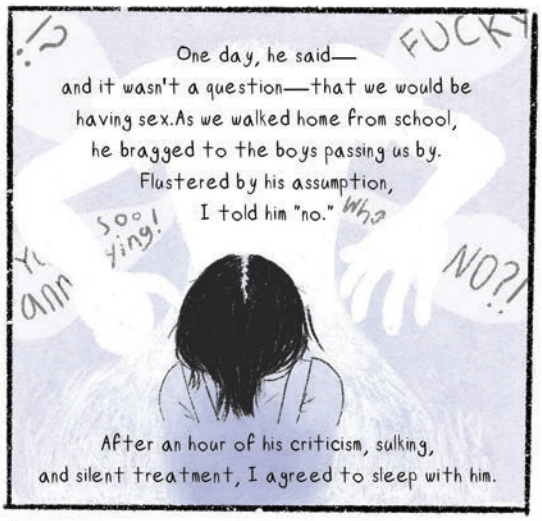
But his nonchalant attitude made me feel infantile and prudish in my reluctance.

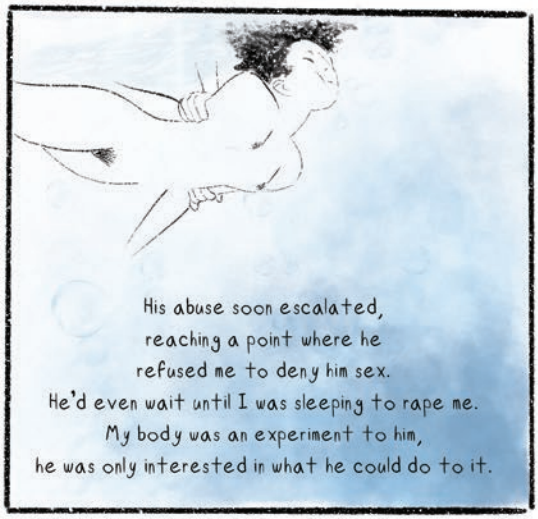
Should I know how to do this?
Is this what everyone does?
Why haven't I done all this before?

I had been invited into unfamiliar and dangerous waters without knowing how to swim.
So I mimicked the motions...
...hoping no one would notice my awkward body.

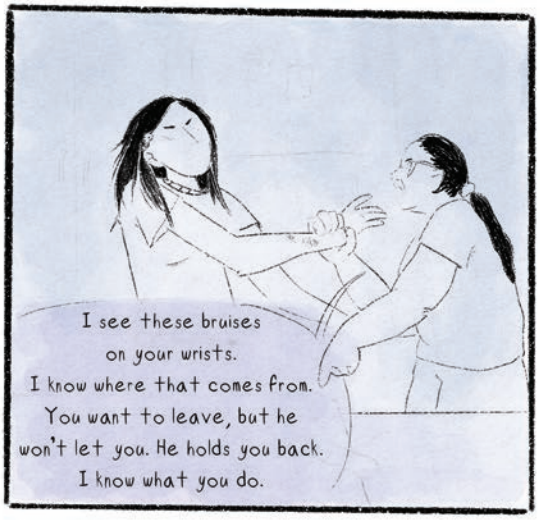
I wanted to give him what he wanted...
He made me feel desirable for the first time...
I didn't want to lose that.
Not realizing what it cost.

I didn't think to consult my family, keeping it a secret for as long as I could. Though I rationalized my decision, somewhere in my body I knew what I was doing was dangerous.
I feared the punishment and shame of putting myself in harm's way.


FUCKY
One day, he said— and it wasn't a question—that we would be having sex.As we walked home from school, he bragged to the boys passing us by. Flustered by his assumption, I told him "no."
Wha
NO?!
After an hour of his criticism, sulking, and silent treatment, I agreed to sleep with him.


His abuse soon escalated, reaching a point where he refused me to deny him sex. He'd even wait until I was sleeping to rape me. My body was an experiment to him, he was only interested in what he could do to it.

It lasted for over a year.
I couldn't admit to my family that I was having sex, let alone that I was being abused.


I see these bruises on your wrists. I know where that comes from. You want to leave, but he won't let you. He holds you back. I know what you do.

So save me. Why won't you save me?

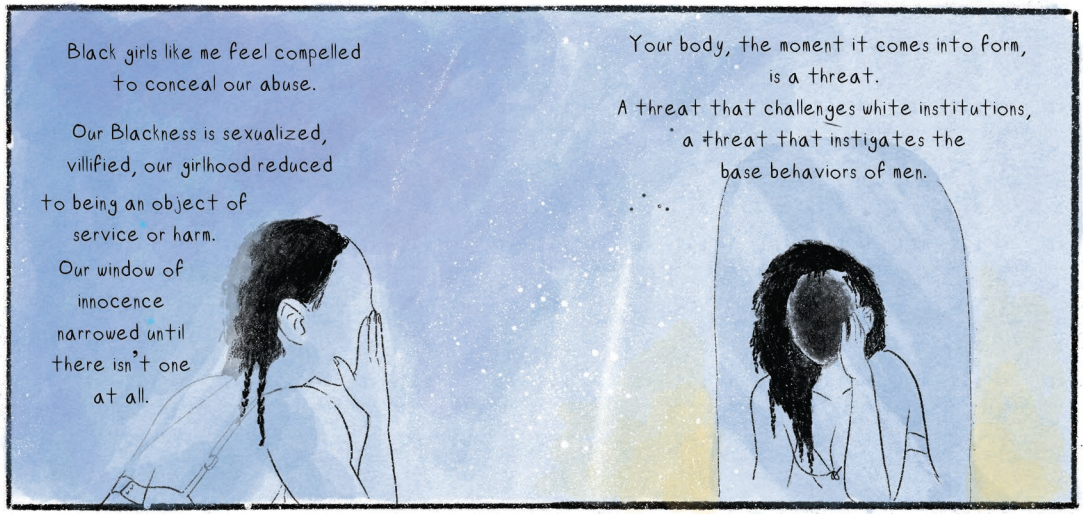
While teaching in 2018,
I earned the trust of a young girl.
She shared with me her experience of sexual assault.

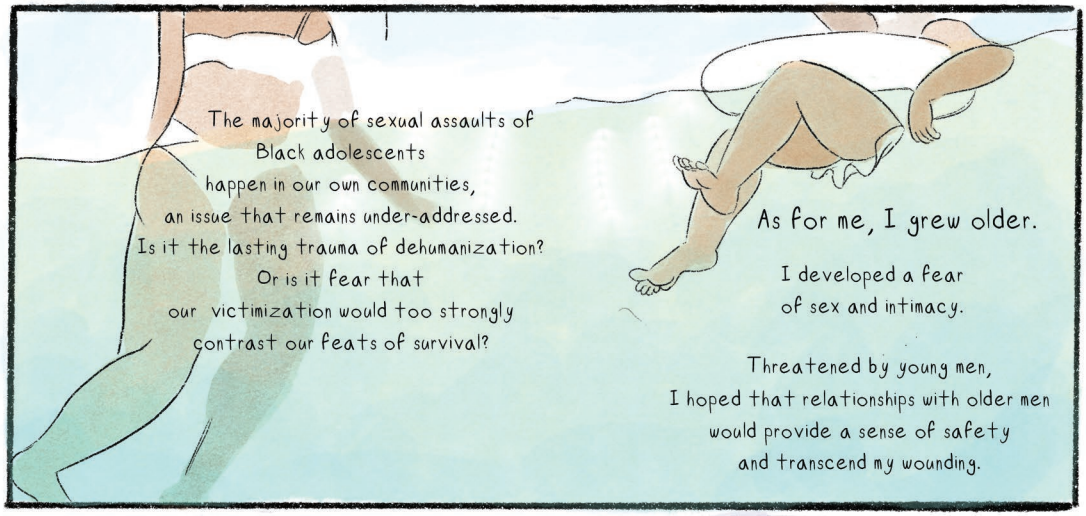
After some time, she decided to admit what happened to her family, but they blamed her and accused her of trying to ruin his reputation.

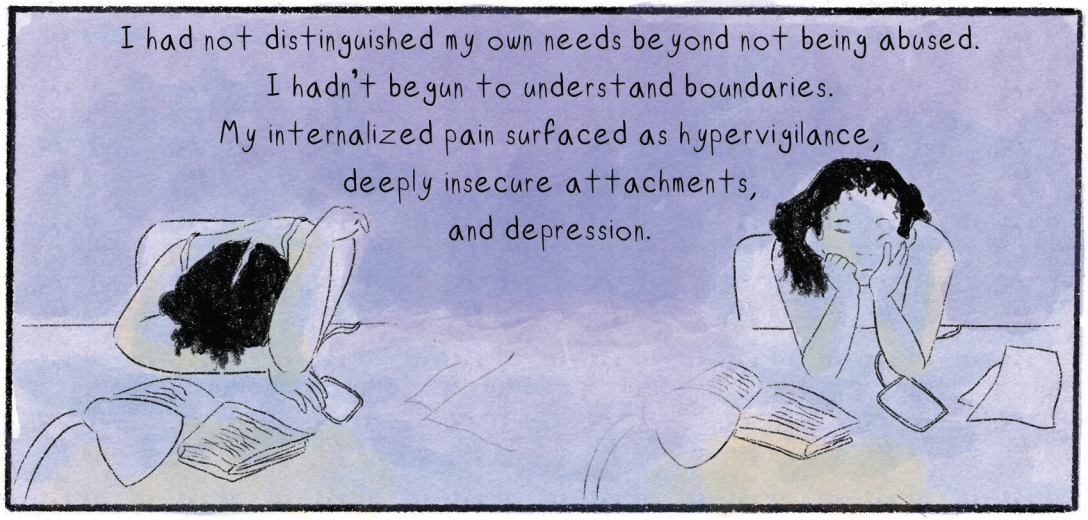
She told me she didn't feel safe at home, so I helped her get to her grandmother's.
The next day she was pulled from the program.
I never saw her again.

A twenty-five-year-old man.
Her father's friend.

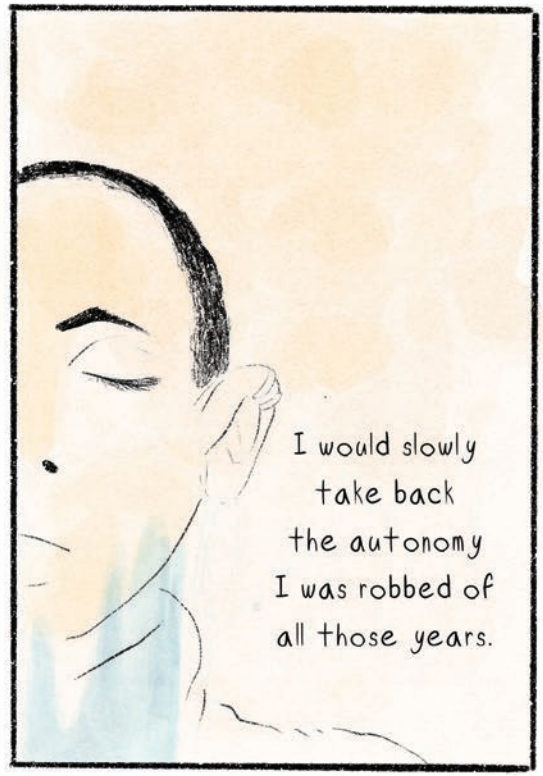
At fourteen, she was forced to share in detail the nature of the assault with her abuser present.
"He was right next to me."
"I just froze."
When she couldn't testify, her case was dropped.


Black girls like me feel compelled to conceal our abuse.
Our Blackness is sexualized, villified, our girlhood reduced to being an object of service or harm.
Our window of innocence narrowed until there isn't one at all.
Your body, the moment it comes into form, is a threat.
A threat that challenges white institutions, a threat that instigates the base behaviors of men.

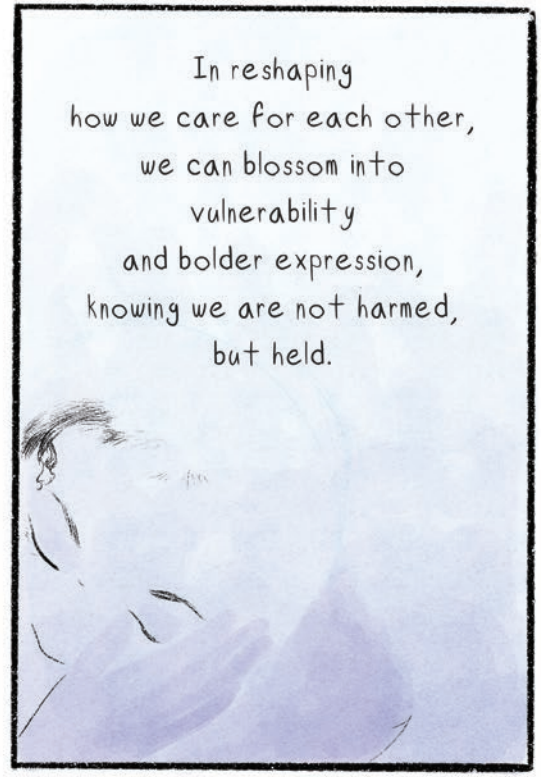

The majority of sexual assaults of Black adolescents happen in our own communities, an issue that remains under-addressed.
Is it the lasting trauma of dehumanization? Or is it fear that our victimization would too strongly contrast our feats of survival?
As for me, I grew older.
I developed a fear of sex and intimacy.
Threatened by young men, I hoped that relationships with older men would provide a sense of safety and transcend my wounding.


I had not distinguished my own needs beyond not being abused.
I hadn't begun to understand boundaries.
My internalized pain surfaced as hypervigilance, deeply insecure attachments, and depression.

I nursed feelings of
worthlessness and shame
until these sensations defined me.
Eventually I chose
to break the cycle.
Opening up about my abuse
to close friends,
I was shocked to be shown
so much empathy.


I would slowly
take back
the autonomy
I was robbed of
all those years.

I would stand in my body
as powerful, sensual,
worth pleasing and protecting.


In reshaping
how we care for each other,
we can blossom into
vulnerability
and bolder expression,
knowing we are not harmed,
but held.

BE GAY DO COMICS!

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And many, many more!

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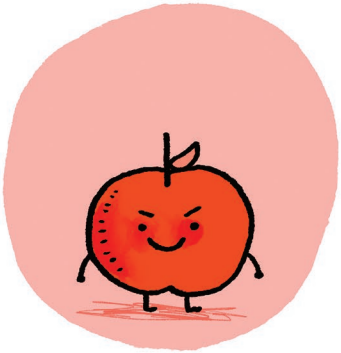
STRIPS

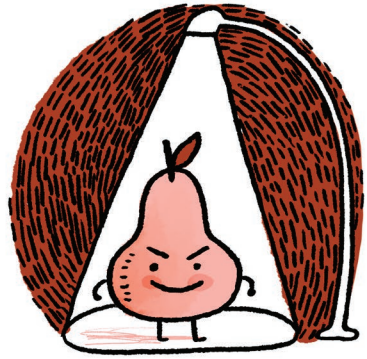
Ugh. Life is so hard sometimes.
Aren't you using the life walkthrough?
The what now?
The walkthrough. It's posted online. You just search for it and it tells you how to get through all the different stages of life.
There are even cheat codes and locations of upgrades and bonus items.
Ooh! 500 bucks!
Now that I think about it, what difficulty level did you select when you were born? I'm guessing Super Extreme Challenge Mode.
joey alison sayers

HEALTH SECRETS

THAT KEEP THE DOCTOR AT BAY

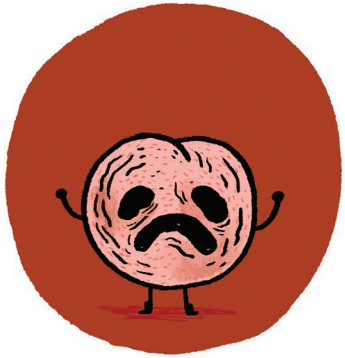


AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY.

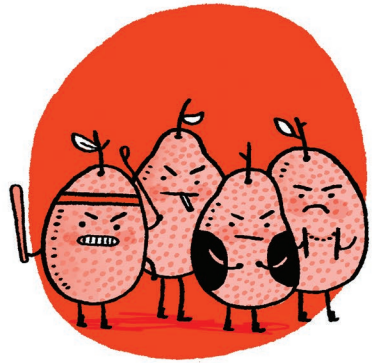


A PEAR IN THE NIGHT GIVES THE DOCTOR A FRIGHT.

A FIG IN THE MORNING SENDS THE DOCTOR A WARNING.



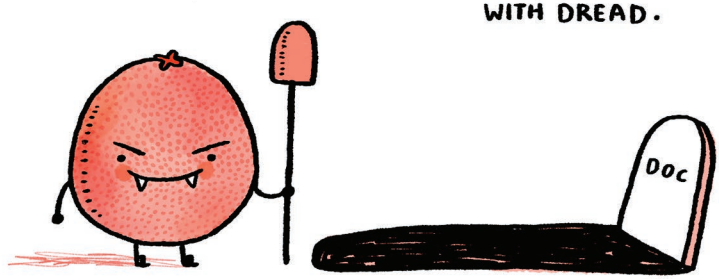
AN OVERRIPE PEACH AT THE DOOR SCARES THE DOCTOR SOME MORE.



IF THE DOC WON'T OBEY, SEND SOME KUMQUATS THEIR WAY.

A SEVERED GRAPE IN THE BED FILLS THE DOCTOR WITH DREAD.

THE DOCTOR WILL AVOID ALL FRUIT IF THEY'RE CLEVER...



'CAUSE A BLOODTHIRSTY ORANGE KEEPS THE DOC AWAY - FOREVER.

Mattie Lubchansky

HAVANA SYNDROME

SECOND OPINIONS

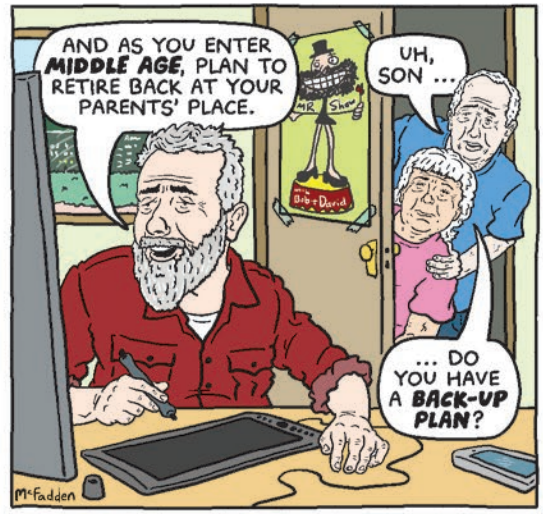
PHEW! I MADE RENT!
THE SECRETS OF MY VERY MINOR SUCCESS

HAVE PARENTS WHO CAN AFFORD TO LET YOU LIVE WITH THEM AFTER COLLEGE.
IMPEACH DUBYA!
THAT'S OUR PRIVILEGED BOY!

GET PUBLISHED RIGHT BEFORE THE ALT-WEEKLY INDUSTRY COLLAPSES.
THANKS! CAN YOU TURN OFF THE LIGHTS ON YOUR WAY OUT?
THE BOSTON PHOENIX
EDITORIAL

BE EXTREMELY LUCKY AND HAVE A DECENT GIG FALL IN YOUR LAP FOR A COUPLE YEARS.
New York Times
SUNDAY REVIEW
BOUSIE OPINION
BRETBUG
MANHATTAN SPECIFIC THING
THE STRIP
McFadden

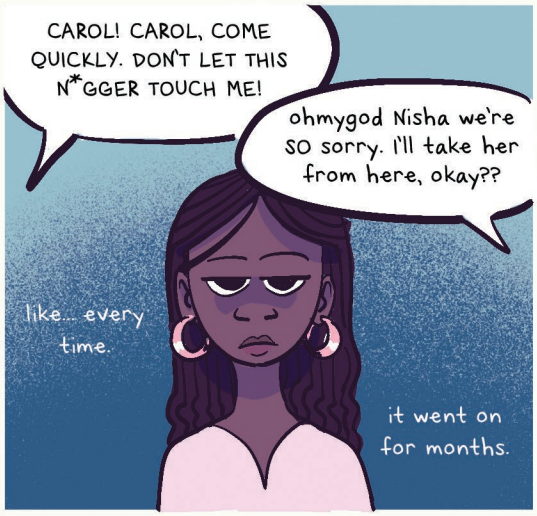
Married
FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE WHO'LL SUPPORT YOU WHEN WORK GETS THIN.
DO YOU TAKE THIS CARTOONIST AND HIS JOB PRECARITY?


AND AS YOU ENTER MIDDLE AGE, PLAN TO RETIRE BACK AT YOUR PARENTS' PLACE.
UH, SON ...
... DO YOU HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN?
McFadden

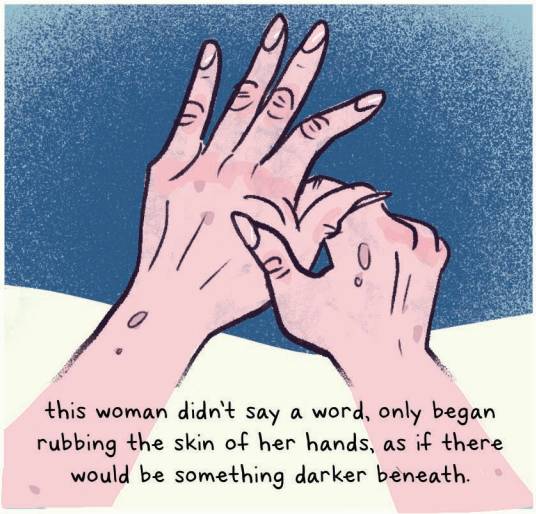
Here you go!
Mabuhay!
Filipino Cuisine
Enjoy!
Maraming salamat!
Ah, the best place for lunch!
I agree 100%, young man!
The rest of the city, nay, the world, needs to know about this food! To think I discovered it—
NO FANCY NEWSPAPER FOOD CRITICS!
How will older white people find new foods without being friends with Black or Brown people?!
Today our tastebuds head to Southeast Asia
NO PODCASTERS!
Listeners, this neighborhood is dangerous!
I'm being attacked by a local!
AND NO INFLUENCERS!
C'mon! Don't you want this to be the next big Oriental food trend?!
Finally! I can relax and eat!
...And then, someone will kick you out of this place! I think it's part of their culture.
Ooo, that sounds authentic! Let's go in!

my mom recently told me a story about one of her first jobs at a nursing home at 18, around 1986...

specifically of this old woman who, every time she saw my mom, said something like:



but one night, on a quiet shift, something came over my mom. she confronted her - with kindness.



this woman didn't say a word, only began rubbing the skin of her hands, as if there would be something darker beneath.

after that night, she never called my mom a n*gger again.

instead she smiled shyly when she saw her, and called her by her name.

back then, my mom never told anyone how the woman had her change of heart.

but she's more than happy to share these days.

—mariah-rose marie

MY SECRET IS SO BORING by EMILY FLAKE

I BOUGHT A LOT OF THINGS DURING THE PANDEMIC.* NONE OF THEM ARE SECRET EXCEPT FOR THIS THING.

YES, IT'S A VIBRATOR.

* WHAT I LACK IN MONEY I MAKE UP FOR IN UNEARNED OPTIMISM ABOUT CREDIT CARDS

OK, LET'S - UNGK-

... THAT WAS FAST.

TO CALL THIS THING A SEX "TOY" DRESSES IT UP WITH A BIT TOO MUCH WHIMSY. IT'S A STARTLINGLY EFFICIENT SEXUAL DEVICE. MAYBE TOO EFFICIENT.

IT'S NOT THAT MY MARRIAGE IS UNHAPPY OR THAT I'M NO LONGER ATTRACTED TO MY HUSBAND.

IT'S JUST THAT TAKING OUT YOUR WHOLE BODY AND PUTTING IT WITH ANOTHER BODY IS ... A LOT OF EFFORT SOMETIMES.

I'D BE LESS LIKELY TO KEEP IT A SECRET IF IT WAS SEXY. BUT AS IT IS, IT'S KIND OF THE OPPOSITE OF ANY SORT OF DESIRE.

MOST OF THE TIME I DON'T EVEN BOTHER TO CUE ANYTHING UP FROM THE SPANK BANK.

IT'S LIKE THIS: I LOVE TO COOK, BUT SOMETIMES YOU JUST WANNA ZAP SOMETHING IN THE MICROWAVE AND GET IT OVER WITH.

YES, I TOO FIND THAT SENTIMENT DEPRESSING.

I MEAN, I'M ALREADY OUTSOURCING A TON OF SHIT TO MACHINES. WHAT'S ONE MORE THING?

THINK OF IT AS A ROOMBA FOR A VAG-

- JUST AN EASY WAY TO TAKE CARE OF A ... SEX CHORE.

OH, GOD.

e. flake

C'MON, GOTTA BE SOMETHING I CAN USE IN HERE.
CANNED PEACHES, METAL, MAYBE SOME WATER.
AH, WHAT'S THIS?
A KNOWLEDGE TOME OF THE OLD WORLD.
The Secret
"ASK, BELIEVE, AND RECEIVE." YES, YES, I CAN MANIFEST MY ULTIMATE DESIRE!
The Secret
A QUICK DEATH!
BORS

Julia Bernhard

HEY BURT, GOT MORE BEERS. GONNA PUT THEM IN THE SHADE OVER HERE.
WANT TO KNOW A SECRET?
YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE UNDINE. THE WATER SPIRIT OF THESE WOODS...
I KNOW, I AM TOO.
JUST KNOWING SHE'S OUT THERE. READY TO PULL ME UNDER...
NA, MAN. IT'S SOMETHING ELSE.
BUT I FORGOT!

the Mystery of the Daily Newsletter

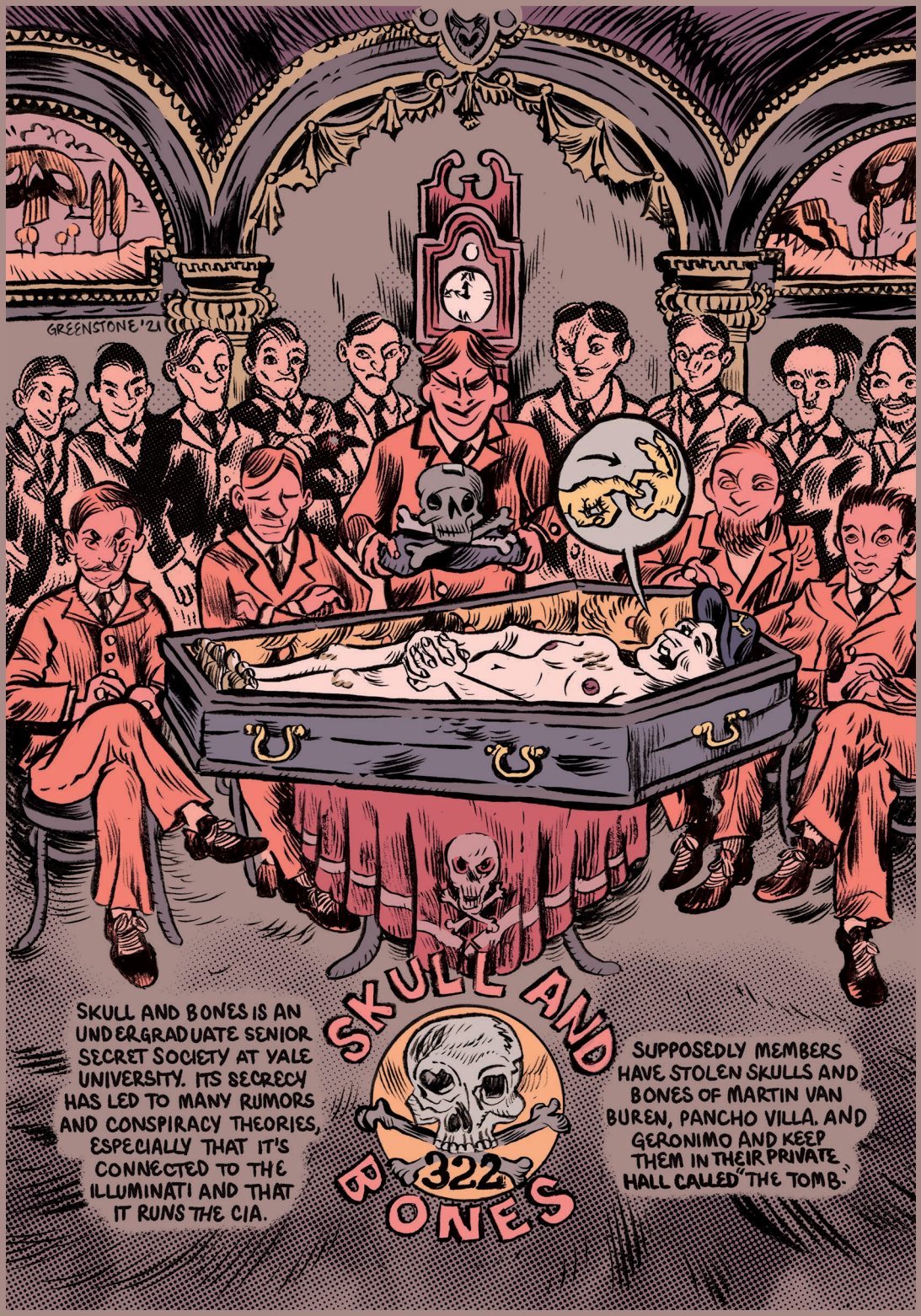
Illustration by Mark Kaufman

Sign up for the NIB Daily Newsletter

His pulse quickened, and beads of sweat formed on his brow as his bony fingers cracked open the laptop revealing comics that awaited him each day.

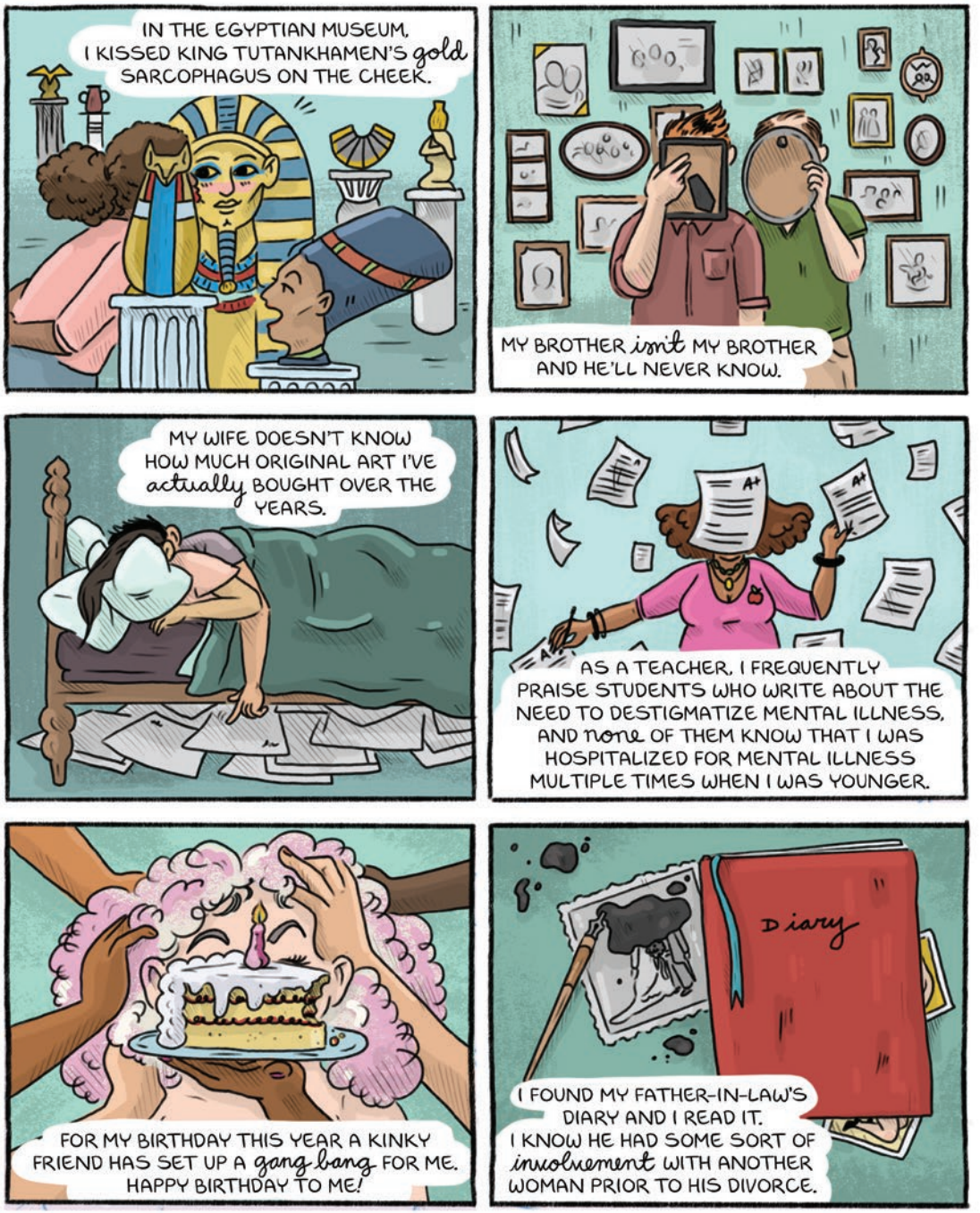
Sure, it can be dangerous at times, but *if you need* our award-winning comics dead-dropped directly to your inbox sign up now at **thenib.com/daily.**

THE NIB

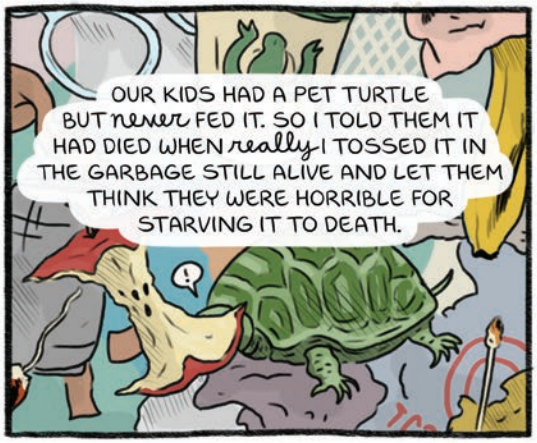

GREENSTONE '21
SKULL AND BONES IS AN UNDERGRADUATE SENIOR SECRET SOCIETY AT YALE UNIVERSITY. ITS SECRECY HAS LED TO MANY RUMORS AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES, ESPECIALLY THAT IT'S CONNECTED TO THE ILLUMINATI AND THAT IT RUNS THE CIA.
SKULL AND BONES
322
SUPPOSEDLY MEMBERS HAVE STOLEN SKULLS AND BONES OF MARTIN VAN BUREN, PANCHO VILLA, AND GERONIMO AND KEEP THEM IN THEIR PRIVATE HALL CALLED "THE TOMB."

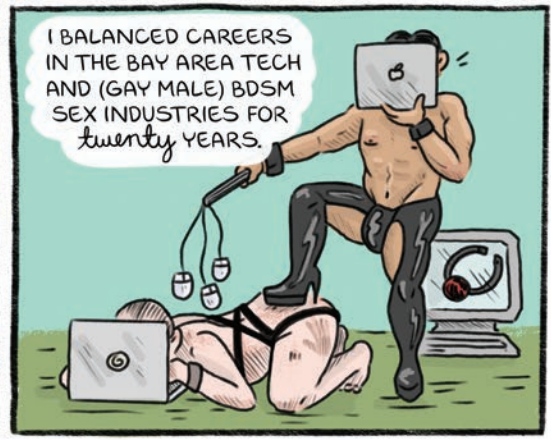
Letters to the Editor

What's Your Little Secret?



Secrets make the world go round. Without them we could ruin relationships, lose our jobs, or just plain embarrass ourselves. We asked The Nib*'s Inkwell members to tell us their deepest, darkest secrets for Katie Wheeler to illustrate.*





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Asia Bey is a multimedia artist and cartoonist based in Philadelphia. Asia's work explores identity through abstract storytelling, absurdity, and autobiographical pieces. They are currently working on their grant-funded graphic novel *EXA: Or the Truth About Little Girls*, set for release summer 2022. What is hiding is what's within.

E.S. Glenn is a semi-reclusive American cartoonist living in Berlin. His work grows out of his tumultuous upbringing and personal experiences. Recently he has begun submitting cartoons to *The New Yorker* on an ongoing basis.

Micah Lee works with secrets every day. He's in charge of information security at *The Intercept*, where he helps whistleblowers securely talk with journalists. He also develops software like OnionShare and Dangerzone that help people stay anonymous and secure, and is involved in organizations like Tor Project and Distributed Denial of Secrets.

Miriam Libicki is an Israeli-American cartoonist living in Canada (and occasionally France). Her most recent book is the essay collection *Toward a Hot Jew*, and her upcoming book is *Glasnost Kids: How Post-Soviet Child Refugees and Other Schmoes in Our Thirties Are Saving/Killing the Jewish People* (both from Fantagraphics). She is good at keeping secrets because she is bad at paying attention when people are talking to her.

Max Loh is a Malaysian comic artist eating his way through the world. He's always on the lookout for hidden culinary gems, shared in whispers amongst those who know.

Meg O'Shea is an Ignatz Award–nominated, Korean-adoptee maker of comics and pictures based in Sydney, Australia (Gadigal and Wangal land). She spent the last two years in Korea undertaking research for a longform autobiographical project before returning to Australia this year, and hopes to one day turn all of her secrets into comics so she has none left.

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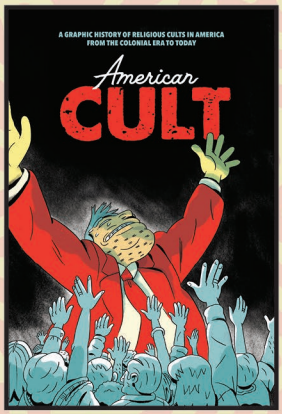
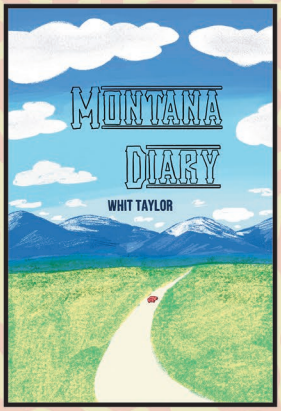
A graphic history of religious cults in America from the colonial era to today



The Antifa Supersoldier Cookbook
By Mattie Lubchansky
What if everything the right thought about the left was real?

Montana Diary
By Whit Taylor
A travelogue balancing millennial humor with resonant observations about the state's complicated history



Your Black Friend and Other Strangers
By Ben Passmore
A collection of award-winning comics about race, politics, and social issues

SILVER SPROCKET is a San Francisco-based publisher, shop, and gallery championing socially conscious and independently produced comic books, graphic novels, and related arts. **SILVERSPROCKET.NET**

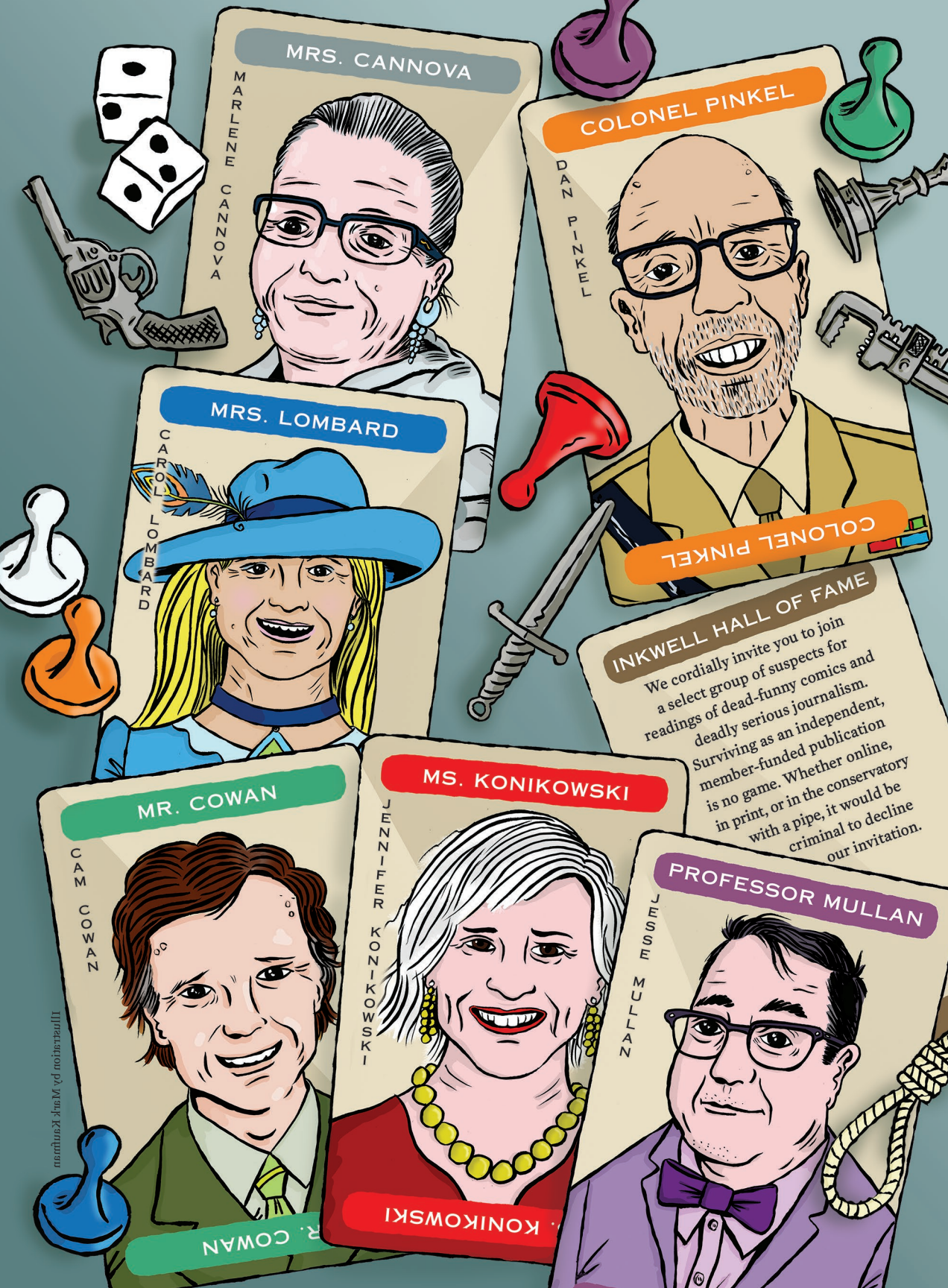
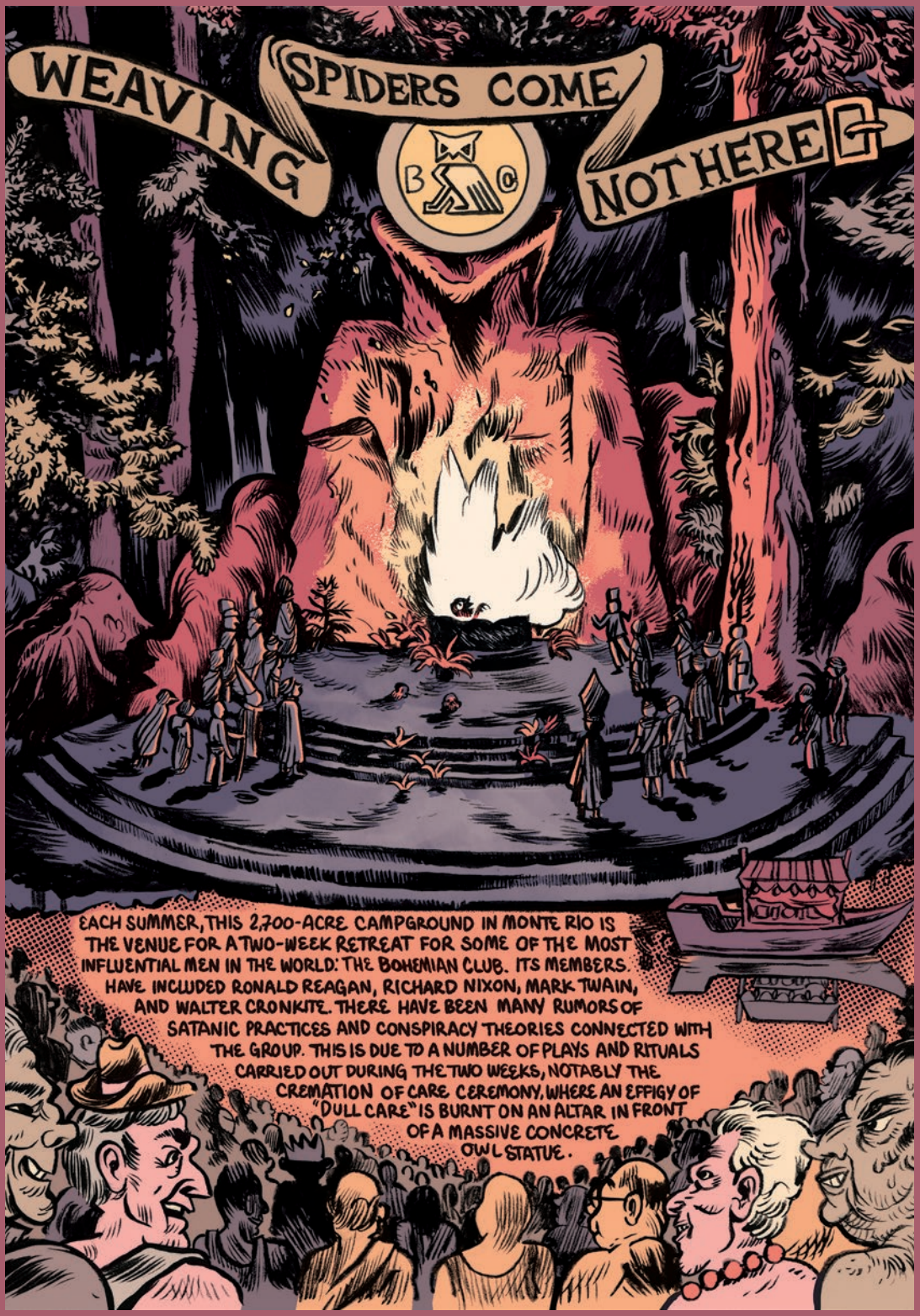
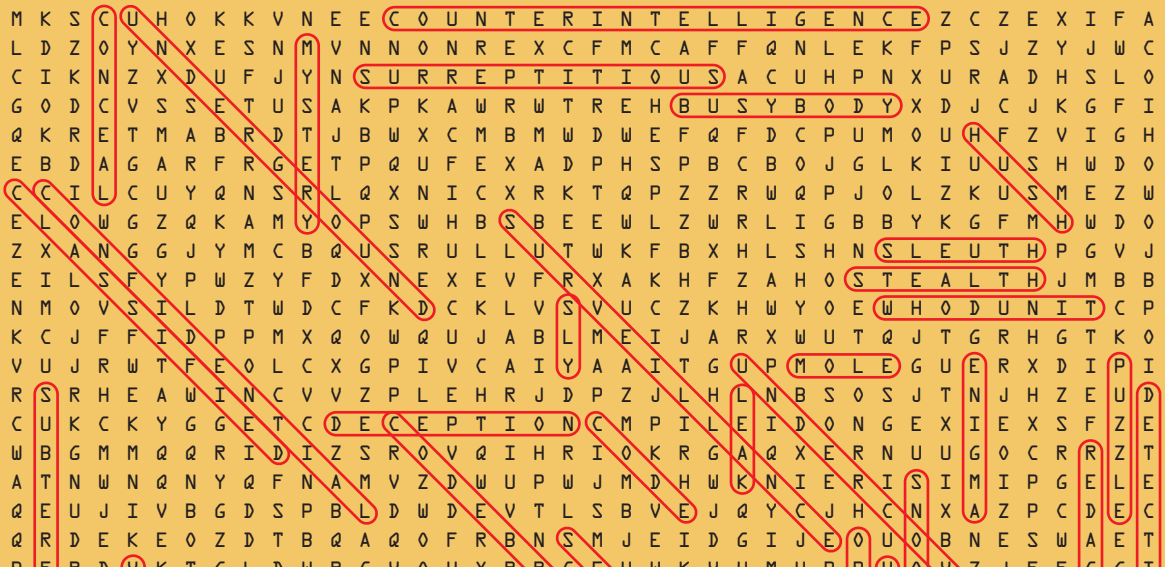


Illustration by Mark Kaufman


WEAVING SPIDERS COME NOT HERE
EACH SUMMER, THIS 2,700-ACRE CAMPGROUND IN MONTE RIO IS THE VENUE FOR A TWO-WEEK RETREAT FOR SOME OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MEN IN THE WORLD: THE BOHEMIAN CLUB. ITS MEMBERS HAVE INCLUDED RONALD REAGAN, RICHARD NIXON, MARK TWAIN, AND WALTER CRONKITE. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY RUMORS OF SATANIC PRACTICES AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES CONNECTED WITH THE GROUP. THIS IS DUE TO A NUMBER OF PLAYS AND RITUALS CARRIED OUT DURING THE TWO WEEKS, NOTABLY THE CREMATION OF CARE CEREMONY, WHERE AN EFFIGY OF "DULL CARE" IS BURNT ON AN ALTAR IN FRONT OF A MASSIVE CONCRETE OWL STATUE.



YOU FOUND THE *SECRET* WORDS! THEY KNOW! THEY'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU!

YOUR EVERY MOVE IS UNDER SURVEILLANCE, THEY KNOW YOUR DEEPEST, DARKEST SECRETS. THEY'RE WATCHING YOU 24/7.

THEY KNOW WHOM YOU CALL, THEY KNOW WHERE YOU GO WHEN YOU THINK NOBODY IS LOOKING. THEY'VE BUGGED YOUR PHONE, THEY LISTEN

TO EVERY CONVERSATION, THEY SEE THE WEBSITES YOU VISIT. THEY KNOW YOUR CREDIT SCORES. THEY KNOW WHAT YOU BUY, WHAT

YOU EAT, WHERE YOU GO. HELL, THEY EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER. BUT DON'T WORRY, YOUR SECRETS ARE SAFE WITH US.

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Cartoonists spill their secrets on CIA sex dolls, secret fathers, hidden nukes, gender identity, awkward straight people, racist tattoos, and more.

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